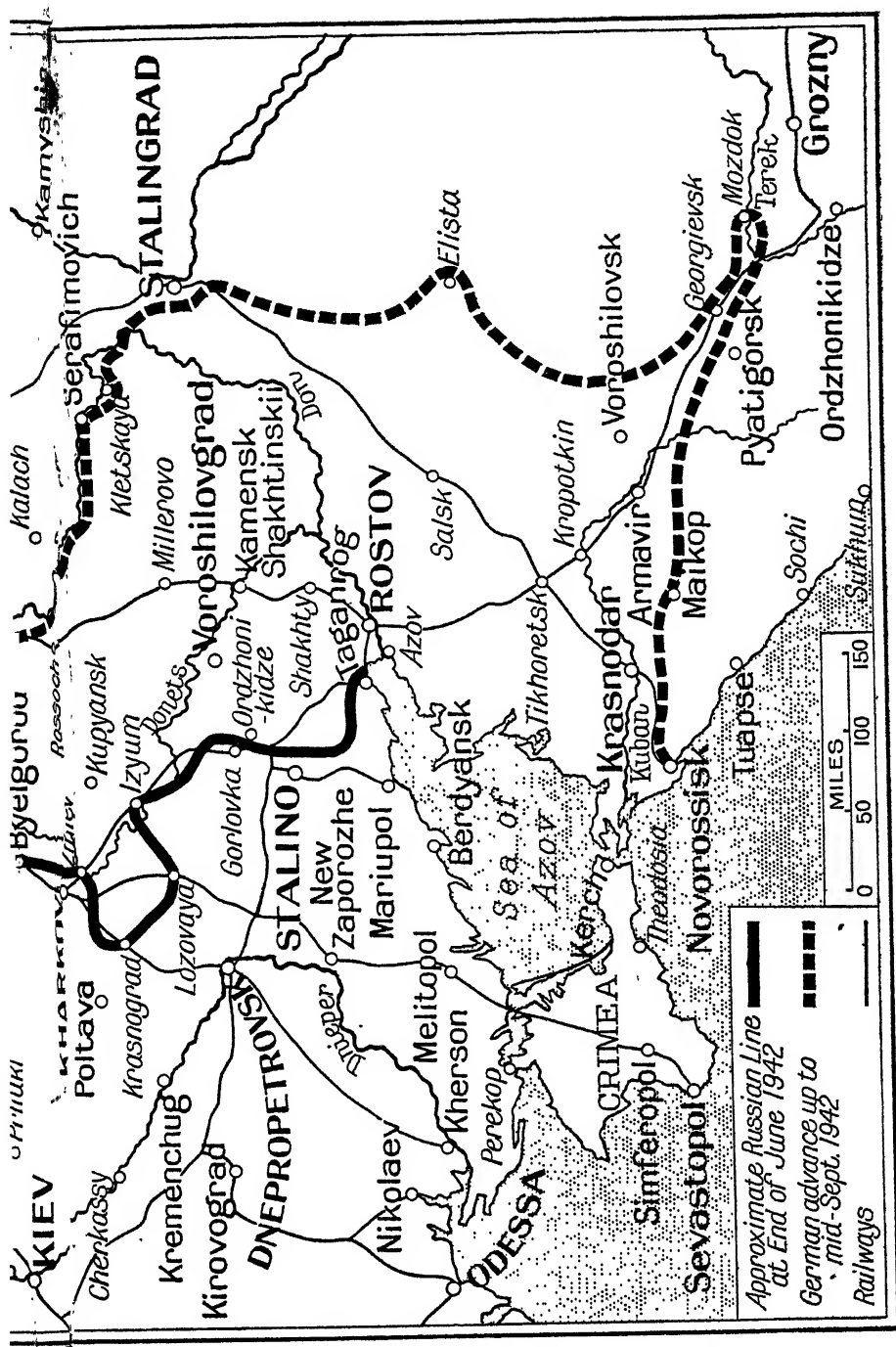


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GENERAL. GEORGE MARSHALL, C.G.S. U.S. ARMY

*A Record of the War*

THE TWELFTH QUARTER

*July 1, 1942—September 30, 1942*

PHILIP GRAVES

*Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers) Ltd.*  
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## P R E F A C E

*The Eleventh Quarter* described a period of disaster for the United Nations relieved by American successes in the Pacific and by the stubborn courage of the Russian defenders of Kertch and Sebastopol. This volume chronicles the principal military and political events of a period in which the situation, although still critical (more especially on the Russian Front), yet gave more promise of improvement than in any preceding period since the overthrow of France. The Russian campaign is described by Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. de Watteville, C.B.E., to whose clear and searching analysis of German and Russian plans and methods I would pay high tribute. In the succeeding section of the same chapter, Dr. R. H. Worsley gives a well-documented description of the German "colonial" policy in Eastern Europe, including the occupied regions of Russia, which merits the title of a "Black Record" of exploitation and tyranny. I also wish to thank Mr. S. W. Mason, Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Times*, for his careful narrative of the activities of King, Ministers and Parliament in Chapter IX, to Mr. Douglas Brown for his account of the German and Italian home fronts in Chapter VII, and to Mr. J. H. Freeman of *The Times* for his account of the affairs of Occupied, Pétainist and Fighting France in Chapter VIII, Section 2. I also record my thanks to the military, naval and aeronautical correspondents of *The Times* for their advice and aid, and to the map department of that great newspaper.

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# CHAPTER I

## THE GRAND ALLIANCE

### I : BRITAIN AND THE U.S.A.

The disasters sustained by the British Army in Libya, the defensive character of American operations in the Pacific, the probability that Hitler would soon let loose a terrific offensive in Russia, and the severance of useful land communications between China and her allies had left the somewhat mercurial public opinion of the United States impatient and annoyed. The importance of the battles of Midway and the Coral Sea which had broken some of the most dangerous fangs of the Japanese sea-dragon was not fully grasped. The loss of the Burma Road, the fall of Sebastopol and Tobruk had aroused dismay in some and concern in all quarters, and the effect of the Libyan reverses on Mr. Churchill's position was anxiously discussed by many Americans, who did not realize how calm—or unimaginative—the British people and their politicians could be in dangerous moments. Dissatisfaction with the American President's administration also increased. It was partly due to a natural impatience at the slowness of the American counter to the Japanese lead-off which took no account of the limitations imposed upon naval and military movements by geography and by the necessity to build up powerful material reserves to sustain an eventual offensive. It was also encouraged by the President's political opponents, some adversaries of the New Deal, some isolationists who whispered that Mr. Roosevelt's policy had invited Japanese (and eventually German) attack, others just keen Republicans who did not see why a national war should interfere with the national sport of party politics. Unluckily, there is a marked tendency among many



American writers and politicians to work off their annoyance at the troubles of the United States by criticizing the British Empire or British political leadership. So it happened in this quarter. There was much "twisting the lion's tail," and British politicians, generals (particularly generals) and administrators came under brisk sniping.

These criticisms had drawn a spirited reply from Mr. Harry Hopkins in his speech of June 22, predicting a second front,<sup>1</sup> and other speakers and writers followed his example later. Thus on the eve of July 4, the 166th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the *New York Times* observed that, in fairness to the British, Americans could not ignore the effect of their own disasters at Pearl Harbour and in the Philippines on the British problem of the defence of Malaya, Burma and Egypt. The dissipation of fears that the House of Commons' debate of July 2 might be the prelude to a political upheaval in Great Britain relieved the unnecessary if most complimentary anxiety of many Americans as to the effect of Libyan disappointments and losses on the moral of the people of Britain. In this connection the *New York Times* (*loc. cit.*) called on Americans to reaffirm their faith in

"British courage, British endurance, British honour. Now, above all other times, let us give thanks for three years of steady courage and uncomplaining sacrifice on the part of the British people. Now in a dark hour let us be both generous enough and realistic enough to recognize that without that courage and that sacrifice our position would be far more perilous than it is to-day. . . . Let us salute the brave people who for more than two years have held the fort for us."

Similar appeals had to be made from time to time during the following months, but it should be said at once that the United States Government could not have been more helpful and sympathetic than they showed themselves during the critical period that followed the invasion of Egypt. Nothing that could help our hard-pressed Eighth Army was held back on account of American needs. They were good allies and good friends, and their military and naval advisers co-operated

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, p. 8.

most effectively and whole-heartedly with their British opposite numbers.

While nothing was publicly known of the decisions taken in common by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill in their meeting in June, the statement issued on June 22<sup>1</sup> in London and Washington indicated that agreement had been reached as to the accomplishment of "the vast and grave tasks" which faced the two Governments. It was not clear at the time whether these tasks were merely defensive or whether they went further than the maintenance of supplies to Russia and the relief of the pressure on Egypt and the British Atlantic lifeline. It was not until September 8 that the White House disclosed that an important conference had been held in London in July between high officers and officials of the two Governments. The Americans engaged therein were Mr. Harry Hopkins, "as personal representative of the President," General George Marshall, Chief of Staff, and Admiral Ernest King, Chief of Naval Operations. The statement concluded :

"The American Chiefs of Staff and Mr. Harry Hopkins held important meetings, covering a period of ten days, with the British Chiefs of Staff and the British Prime Minister. At these conferences the whole conduct of the war was thoroughly canvassed and, with the approval of the President necessary decisions regarding military operations were made."

On the same day Mr. Churchill, before giving his account of his Eastern journey to Parliament, had dealt with the American mission which he cited as an example of the "continued efforts . . . made by us and our Allies to unify and concert the command and action of the United Nations," in spite of "all the difficulties which geography can interpose." After naming the chiefs of the mission and referring to their numerous conferences with the British Chiefs of Staff, the War Cabinet and the Defence Committee, "which is a somewhat smaller grouping of it," he continued :

"During a period of ten days or more the whole field of the war was explored, and every problem of importance in it was scrutinized and weighed. Decisions of importance were taken affecting the whole future

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, p. 9, for its text.

general conduct of our operations not only in Europe but throughout the world. These decisions were in accordance with the wishes of President Roosevelt, and they received his final approval. Thus, by the end of July, complete agreement on war policy and war plans had been reached between Great Britain and the United States. This agreement covers the whole field of the war in every part of the world and also deals with the necessary productive and administrative measures which are required to enforce the combined policy and strategy which have been agreed upon."

In his "fireside chat" on the previous evening Mr. Roosevelt, besides dealing with the need to avoid a domestic economic crisis, gave a review of the war in which he said: "Certain vital decisions have been made. In due time you will know what these decisions are—and so will our enemies. I can say now that all of these decisions are directed towards taking the offensive." He referred to the success of the Russians in doing more damage to the German armies and their material than was done on any other front. He warned his fellow-countrymen against overrating their successes in the Solomons, although "we need not underrate the significance of our victory at Midway. There we stopped a major Japanese offensive." In the European area, he continued:

"the aim is offensive against Germany. There are at least a dozen different points at which attacks can be launched. . . . You can rest assured that preparations are being made here and in Britain towards this purpose. The power of Germany must be broken on the battlefields of Europe."

To revert to the American mission to London, it was clear that while organized Anglo-American co-operation was being furthered in every possible way by the two Governments, the links between the English-speaking Allies and Russia required to be tightened. Naturally there could be no direct co-operation as yet between their armies, only fractions of which were yet engaged, and the Russian Army which was fighting its greatest battle against the Axis invaders. But it was of high importance that plans for the future should be discussed; that the Russians should state their needs of material and supplies which losses of territory and factories had made more urgent; above all, that Allied plans and intentions should be fully explained to the Russian dictator. The Russians,

though resolved to fight to the last, were comparing their own total immersion in the war with the limited "baptism of fire" which the American and British Armies had experienced,<sup>1</sup> and were in addition quite ignorant of the extent of the effort and preparation required for the dispatch of a powerful overseas expedition. They were, therefore, in a frame of mind that was by no means conducive to the co-operative spirit that, by hope and hypothesis, was to govern Anglo-Russian relations after the war. More direct contact between the leaders of the nations was urgently necessary.

This contact could only be brought about by one man, for neither President Roosevelt nor M. Stalin could leave their respective countries, and it was left to Mr. Churchill to take his risks and make the voyage to Moscow. The story of his journey is told in the following section of this chapter. It was largely successful. The Russian Army and elements among the Russian people still asked what their Allies were doing; the Russian leaders, to judge from M. Stalin's later utterances, began to doubt again after a while, but the British Prime Minister had nevertheless accomplished much in Russia, and his visit to the British armies in the Middle East was big with consequences.

On August 14, the anniversary of the Atlantic Charter, Mr. Roosevelt sent Mr. Churchill and the heads of the United Nations the following message :

A year ago to-day the Prime Minister of Great Britain and I, as representatives of two free nations, set down and subscribed to a declaration of principles common to our peoples. We based, and continue to base, our hopes for a better future for the world on the realization of these principles. This declaration is known as the Atlantic Charter.

A year ago to-day the nations resisting a common barbaric foe were units or small groups fighting for their existence.

Now these nations and groups of nations in all the continents of the earth have united. They have formed a great union of humanity, dedicated to the realization of that common programme of purposes and principles set forth in the Atlantic Charter through world-wide victory over their common enemies. Their faith in life, liberty, independence, and religious

<sup>1</sup> They did not, perhaps, realize that the British forces and people had stood up alone to the Blitzkrieg in 1940; or perhaps they did realize the effect of their own participation in the isolation of Britain and suspected the British of being moved by equally short-sighted considerations.

freedom, and in the preservation of human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands, has been given form and substance as the United Nations.

Freedom and independence are to-day in jeopardy—the world over. If the forces of conquest are not successfully resisted and defeated there will be no freedom and no independence and no opportunity for freedom for any nation.

It is, therefore, to the single and supreme objective of defeating the Axis forces of aggression that the United Nations have pledged all their resources and efforts.

When victory comes we shall stand shoulder to shoulder in seeking to nourish the great ideals for which we fight. It is a worth-while battle. It will be so recognized through all the ages, even amid the unfortunate peoples who follow false gods to-day.

We reaffirm our principles. They will bring us to a happier world.

On September 2, the eve of the third anniversary of the outbreak of war, the City of London welcomed the United States troops in Britain. The contingent of 300 officers and men, under the charge, in the unavoidable absence of General Eisenhower, of Major-General J. C. Lee, were the first guests, as was fitting, of the Lord Mayor and Corporation at luncheon at the Guildhall since it was damaged in the incendiary raid of December 29, 1940. On this occasion Mr. Eden spoke of the need of good faith among the nations and pointed out that the decision to go to war had been freely taken by a united nation which was resolved "to keep faith with a written undertaking to our ally Poland," freely given and freely accepted. He welcomed the aid and co-operation of the United States, whose people knew what good faith meant.

"The cause," said Mr. Eden, "that we and you are serving to-day is the cause that we and you have served in the past. The men who expounded that cause in the past in your country and in ours spoke the same kind of language as the men who are expounding that cause to-day." He added that the belief that victory by itself would produce a new world was dangerous. "The new world is going to demand a much greater sense of responsibility, a greater readiness to face realities, with plain speech and honest action."

Mr. Churchill was still in the Middle East when President Roosevelt announced, on August 21, that Mr. Wendell Willkie would visit Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Persia and Russia, with special tasks in each country as "special representative of the United States." His chief task, said the President, would be to



MR. HARRY L. HOPKINS



tell the truth, especially about American war production. People abroad were getting an incorrect view because of the space given in the Press to small strikes and similar events. Later, the White House announced that Mr. Willkie would visit China. On September 2 he reached Cairo, where he toured the front with General Montgomery (September 6) and noted the significance of Rommel's second repulse. He reached Ankara on September 7 and was able to convince prominent Turks that American figures of production were not exaggerated and that Rommel's "reconnaissance in force" had been a costly reverse. After expressing the satisfaction of the United States at the improvement in Turco-Russian relations to M. Menemenjoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister, and assuring them that American lend-lease deliveries would increase, he visited Jerusalem, Beirut, Baghdad and Teheran. He then continued his journey to Russia, arriving at Moscow on September 20. After a long conversation with M. Stalin on September 23, he visited the Rzhev sector of the front on September 25. On September 27 he warned the American people of the critical dangers which Russia was faced owing to the German advance on Stalingrad,<sup>1</sup> and suggested that America and Great Britain should force the pace of the war as much as possible, provided that the military advisers of their Governments did not think the risks too great. He also suggested that the advisers themselves might need some "public prodding." His recommendations, according to the correspondent of *The Times* at Moscow, were :

"the opening of a real second front in Europe at the earliest possible moment that the military advisers consider it likely to be successful, an increase in material aid in the form of arms, food, medical supplies, and clothing, and the bombing of Germany on an even heavier scale are the ways in which Mr. Willkie considers that America can speed her own victory and give aid to Russia." (*The Times*, September 28.)

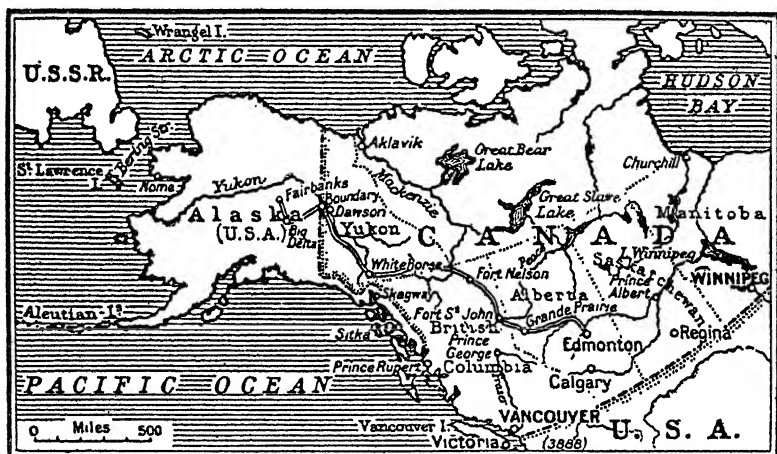
Mr. Attlee, who was then in Canada, and other qualified persons, suggested that there was less need for "prodding" than Mr. Willkie believed, although neither

<sup>1</sup> q.v. Chapter III.



the British nor the American public could form any definite conclusion on that head. His warning left both anxious enough, and justifiable anxiety about Russia was increased by Communists and other Left Wingers who seemed to imagine that the British and U.S. Governments (Heaven knows why ! ) desired a Russian defeat.

In spite of these anxieties, of the anti-British peevishness of a section of the United States Press, of the Jeremiads of pessimistic critics, British and American, who believed



"ALCAN HIGHWAY"

By courtesy of *The Times*

that nothing in the way of an offensive could be undertaken until the spring of 1943, "when it will, of course, be too late," the Governments and the Fighting Services of the United States and the British Commonwealth co-operated ever more closely. British light vessels and aircraft had assisted the American forces to deal with the U-boats on their side of the Atlantic. American aid and reinforcement to the British armies in our island and in the Middle East flowed in a deepening stream ; the General Staffs of the English-speaking Allies worked in unison and kept the secret of their intentions. Nor was the co-operation of the two nations confined to the

Atlantic and the Middle East. On September 24 Mr. Stimson astonished a public that expected much from its engineers by the announcement that the Canadian-Alaskan military road—henceforth known as “Alcan Highway”—would be open to traffic by December 1, several months earlier than the scheduled date. During four months of winter snow it would maintain communications with strategically important and otherwise unapproachable airfields and military centres in Alaska. Ten thousand soldiers and two thousand civilian labourers, under the American Public Roads Administration and the direct command of Major-General Eugene Reybold, had completed its 1,671 miles, mostly through Canadian territory, in less than six months, undeterred by Arctic cold and sweltering summer heat. Its conception, construction and completion bore witness to the loyal co-operation between the great American Republic and the Dominion of Canada for the furtherance of their joint military plans and interests in the North Pacific theatre of war.

## 2 : BRITAIN, AMERICA AND RUSSIA

On August 12 Mr. Churchill arrived in Moscow by air from Egypt. He was accompanied by Mr. Harriman, representing President Roosevelt, Sir Alan Brooke, C.I.G.S., Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Chief of the Middle East Air Command, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Major-General Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief American Forces in Egypt, and other high officers and officials. General Wavell, who was to arrive from India via Persia, had to turn back to Teheran owing to a mishap to his aeroplane, but he reached Moscow next day and took part in the military conversations there. The official part of the proceedings began at the airport where Mr. Churchill was greeted by M. Molotov, Marshal Shaposhnikov, Chief of the Soviet General Staff, and other high Russian officers and officials, and by the British and

American Ambassadors. Mr. Churchill made a brief statement on his arrival. It ran :

"We are full of determination to continue the struggle hand in hand, whatever sufferings and hardships may await us, and to continue the struggle hand in hand as comrades and brothers until the last vestiges of the Hitlerite regime are turned to dust, remaining in the memory as an example and a warning for the future."

Mr. Harriman said :

"The President of the United States asked me to accompany the Prime Minister of Great Britain during his most important journey to Moscow at this decisive moment of the war. The President of the United States will adhere to all the decisions which Mr. Churchill may take here. America will stand by the side of Russia hand in hand at the front."

After greetings and these brief statements, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Harriman went to the Kremlin. That evening they discussed the situation for nearly four hours with M. Stalin. Next day the Prime Minister had a long talk with M. Molotov and a second important meeting with M. Stalin. On Friday, after much official business had been transacted, there was a big dinner at the Kremlin, over which M. Stalin presided and at which all the members of the Defence Committee of the U.S.S.R. and of the Politburo were present to welcome the British and American guests. The dinner lasted until after midnight. It was marked in the words of Reuter's correspondent in Moscow by "the maximum of friendliness and the minimum of formality . . . and M. Stalin himself proposed half a dozen of the total of twenty-five toasts."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Churchill and Mr. Harriman spent most of August 15 in the country near Moscow. They paid a final and farewell visit to M. Stalin late in the afternoon, but complete agreement had been reached on the previous day and the visit had no political significance. Early on August 16 the Prime Minister and his party left Moscow southward bound. On leaving he sent this message to M. Stalin :

"I take the opportunity of thanking you for your comradely attitude and hospitality. I am very glad to have visited Moscow, because I am certain that our contact will play a useful part in furthering our cause. Please convey my kind regards to M. Molotov."

<sup>1</sup> Reuter Moscow message of August 17.

The following official announcement was issued simultaneously in London and Moscow on the night of August 17 :

"Negotiations have taken place in Moscow between the President of the Council of the People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, J. V. Stalin, and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill, in which Mr. Harriman, representing the President of the United States of America, participated.

"There took part in the discussions : The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V. M. Molotov, Marshal K. E. Voroshilov, from the Soviet side ; the British Ambassador, Sir A. Clark Kerr, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir A. Brooke, and other responsible representatives of the British armed forces, and the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir A. Cadogan, from the British side.

"A number of decisions were reached covering the field of the war against Hitlerite Germany and her associates in Europe. This just war of liberation both Governments are determined to carry on with all their power and energy until the complete destruction of Hitlerism and any similar tyranny has been achieved.

"The discussions, which were carried on in an atmosphere of cordiality and complete sincerity, provided an opportunity of reaffirming the existence of close friendship and understanding between the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America in entire accordance with the allied relationship existing between them."

According to the special correspondent of *The Times* in Moscow (*loc. cit.* August 18), the Russian word *peregovory* translated as "negotiations" in the preceding announcement is best translated as "talkings over," or discussions, and this described what actually occurred. The highly important political and military decisions reached by the American and British Governments during Mr. Churchill's visit to the United States in June had been already communicated to the Soviet Government ; but it was none the less necessary to discuss these decisions with the Russian leaders, more especially at a time when the Russian armies were suffering heavy losses and were being subjected to tremendous pressure by the incessant German attacks on their southern flank. In the words of the special correspondent of *The Times* (*ibid.*, August 18),

"The distinguished personages who did the 'talking over' and who ended by being as convinced as ever of the determination of each other's Government to pursue the war with the utmost strength—accurately gauged public opinion here by saying as little as possible ; for deeds, not words, are what the Russians want. In any case it is not the custom of military leaders to publish details of their joint plans for conducting campaigns. . . .

Some two months ago the Russians enthusiastically welcomed the signing of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the London and Washington announcements. It was the references to a second front in 1942 which thrilled them more than anything else then. Enthusiasm began to flag as the weeks passed without an invasion of western Europe, and gave place to doubts, suspicion, and even anger. But faith in the sincerity of Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt is constant, and the pugnacious spirit of the British and American peoples is widely known. The presence of Britain's war planners in Moscow will do much to restore complete confidence, for it will be interpreted as a sign that Great Britain's intervention on the Continent lies not far ahead."

As soon as the Germans learnt that Mr. Churchill was in Moscow, which they would seem to have discovered before the British public had been informed, their propaganda service indulged in much exciting but inaccurate comment, which might be summed up in such imaginary head-lines as "Pluto-democrats sell Europe to Bolshevism," or "Stalin insists on second front now." The story put about by Goebbels' scribes that Mr. Churchill would be held as a hostage in Moscow until the second front materialized was typical of the spirit of their broadcasts. In Turkey and Sweden these inventions did not go down and, in spite of the vaticinations of some of the Falangist newspapers they did not impress the Spaniards.<sup>1</sup>

The effect of Mr. Churchill's visit to Moscow was good. He did not entirely dispel Russian anxieties, although these may have been inspired less by suspicion that the Western Allies would fail Russia than by doubts whether their plans for the opening of a second front could be successfully carried out. But his personal contact with

<sup>1</sup> At the same time some damage was done in Sweden and apparently in the United States by an interview accorded, it was said, by Sir Stafford Cripps to the representative of *Veckojournalen*. In this the Lord Privy Seal spoke of the desire of the U.S.S.R. to retain the frontier wrung from Finland. He also contrasted the present attitude of Russia towards world revolution with that followed when Trotsky was still powerful in Russia. There is no evidence that Sir Stafford Cripps approved Russian territorial demands on Finland but the interview obviously made many Swedish publicists uneasy and *Veckojournalen* commented: "On this point Swedish opinion is united and holds the firm view that the old frontiers before the Treaty of Moscow should be preserved not only in Finnish but also in Nordic (i.e. Scandinavian) interests. The Finnish Socialist organ, *Suomen Sosialdemokraatti*, was perturbed, but it read more into the Lord Privy Seal's statements than was there. Some Swedish newspapers expressed doubts whether official Russia had entirely abandoned the idea of world revolution. German newspapers naturally scoffed at such a suggestion.

the forthright Russian leader was most valuable. Both men were ready to speak their minds frankly and they parted on good terms. They had corresponded freely since the German attack on Russia, but conversation across the table was worth more than any amount of correspondence. In Britain the meeting had a good effect, but it did not greatly diminish the agitation for a second front which at times threatened to take an unreasonable form and had disquieting features.<sup>1</sup> The Government, however, remained silent knowing that any indication of the scope or aims of an Allied offensive might prove instantly fatal to its chances of success and cooler-headed citizens approved their reticence.

<sup>1</sup> Many Labour leaders, while they admired the courage and constancy of the Russian armies, regretted that Russian successes or Russian perils should, in some factories have led to an increase of output which Britain had sorely needed before Russia was involved in the war. They also deplored the suspicions of the British Government's motives manifested by many of the advocates of a second front.

## CHAPTER II

### BRITAIN AND THE ATLANTIC

#### I : THE WAR AT SEA

The first six months of 1942 had been marked by the widespread destruction of British, Allied and neutral shipping in all the main theatres of naval war. The entry of Japan into the conflict had led to the sinking of many British, Dutch, Australian and American vessels in the eastern seas and oceans and by the end of April Japanese submarines had made their appearance off the east African coast. In the Atlantic the German and Italian U-boats had maintained an almost continuous attack on the shipping of the United Nations, shifting the main weight of their offensive from one quarter to another. The waters off eastern Canada and New England, the Atlantic seaboard of the southern states of the American Union, the Caribbean Sea, the sea-lanes past Madeira and the Canaries were never free from U-boats and were from time to time infested by large "packs" of these pests. The Arctic route to Murmansk and Archangel was continuously watched by German aircraft based on Kirkenes and Allied convoys and their escorts, whether coming or going, had to run the gauntlet of heavy attacks by aircraft, destroyers and submarines.

Only in one quarter of the Atlantic was the U-boat brought under a measure of control. The majority of the German submarines operating in the Atlantic were based upon occupied French ports, L'Orient, St. Nazaire, Rochefort, Bordeaux and so forth, on the shores of the Bay of Biscay. They were still able to use the Bay for passage to and from their bases, but they had good reason not to tarry there. They were under continual threat from British aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm and still more of Coastal Command. Although no figures of their

losses were published there was no doubt that a high proportion of the U-boats which were accounted for during the first three-quarters of 1942 met their end in these waters, and that in a large number of cases they fell victims to our aeroplanes and flying-boats either directly through attack with bombs and cannon-guns or from the depth charges of the light naval craft which the British pilots warned of a submarine's appearance in a particular area.

The activities of the long-range German aircraft which had co-operated so closely with the U-boats in these waters during 1941 had also been restricted. For a time our Sunderland flying-boats had the best of the exchanges with the Kuriers and Kondors which the Germans used for long-distance reconnaissance at sea and for attacks on merchantmen at some distance from land.<sup>1</sup> Then the enemy introduced a better long-range machine in the shape of the Arado and sent these out in pairs or threes, thus improving their chances of survival or even of success in encounters with our Sunderlands and other types. The Beaufighter, fast, manoeuvrable, powerfully armed, was our retort, and this long-range fighter proved itself in numerous engagements with the U-boats and their co-operating Arados. In the Channel and the narrower portions of the North Sea the principal danger to shipping came from E-boats and aircraft, but here during the period under review the enemy was generally on the defensive and E-boats and other light craft and the aeroplanes of the *Luftwaffe* could not prevent our aeroplanes and light naval vessels from taking a heavy toll of German and German-controlled shipping.

But if the situation improved nearer home, sinkings of United Nations shipping in the Atlantic left new construction behind during the first six months of 1942, and though many U-boats were destroyed, new construction more than made up for their losses. For strategical reasons the Atlantic was the most important theatre of

<sup>1</sup> At less distance, e.g., in the Channel and its approaches, the enemy used Junkers and Messerschmitt fighter-bombers for attacks on shipping as well as heavy and medium bombers.



naval warfare and it was there that the Axis made its most vigorous efforts to cut the Anglo-American life-line and to prevent, or at least endanger, the transport of United States or Canadian troops to Great Britain and of British troops to the Middle East by the Cape route. July was the seventh successive month in which losses exceeded launchings in the case of Allied merchant vessels, but fell short of them in the case of German submarines ; indeed in the week ending on July 19 the United Nations sustained their heaviest shipping losses since the war began. Many losses were not reported in the British Press, but the following items were recorded in the space of the most disastrous week. On July 13, 109 survivors from a liner sunk in the neighbourhood of the Azores were landed at Ponta Delgada. On the following day the Canadian Government announced that three ships of a convoy had been torpedoed and sunk in the Gulf of St. Lawrence about July 6, and that eight persons were missing or had been killed. On July 17 the American Press was informed that sinkings in the Caribbean had decreased latterly although they had not ceased. Two days later it was announced at New York that three United Nations' ships had been sunk by U-boats in the Atlantic, while another had succumbed to a combined attack by a Japanese U-boat and aircraft in the Indian Ocean.

The Germans claimed to have destroyed 886,000 tons of shipping in June. If the precedent of the last war held good they had overstated their claim by 40 per cent, and the Nazis were more disposed to exaggerate than their predecessors. But even so the loss of over 530,000 tons of shipping in a month was disastrous, and the loss of ships like the liner *Avila Star* of 14,443 tons<sup>1</sup> was particularly serious as vessels of this type were especially suitable for the rapid transport of troops and war material to the Middle East and India. Then the situation improved slightly. In August new construction, principally in

<sup>1</sup> This was presumably the ship lost off the Azores to which reference has been made. Of her passengers and complement about seventy were missing.

the United States, Canada and Great Britain, exceeded the Allied losses. In September there was a further improvement, although in neither month did the sinkings of German and Italian submarines exceed the number completed for sea. Still, at the end of the quarter the shipping situation, although giving no sort of excuse for complacency, was a little less threatening than it had been at the end of the half-year. The causes of this improvement other than the phenomenal output of the United States shipping yards,<sup>1</sup> seem to have been the reinforcement of the escorts of the convoys by an increasing number of corvettes and other small craft which the English-speaking Allies, and especially Canada, were constructing so rapidly and efficiently; the increasing use of Hurricanes catapulted from the decks of merchantmen<sup>2</sup> and, perhaps, the diversion of Axis U-boats to West African waters of which there were indications before the quarter had ended. Whether the appearance of a Japanese submarine in the Atlantic indicated that the Germans had asked for reinforcements from their allies or was merely a demonstration of the alleged solidity of the Triple Alliance was a moot point. To the writer the first supposition seems wishful thinking. The submarine in question was said by the Japanese official wireless on September 25 to have put in to a German naval base, presumably a French Atlantic port, and to have departed on a cruise after refuelling.

While it is impossible without data to make any estimate of the enemy's losses in the Atlantic during these three months they certainly exceeded those of previous quarters. On September 3 the First Lord of the Admiralty at a luncheon given by the National Defence Public Interest Committee, said that July and August had been the "most successful in the war for the number of U-boats destroyed." They were sunk on both sides of the Atlantic. Many perished in the Bay of Biscay. On September 25

<sup>1</sup> q.v. Chapter VI, Section 1

<sup>2</sup> q.v. *The Eighth Quarter*, pp. 15, 16. These were particularly useful in seas where attacks from enemy aircraft as well as submarines were to be expected, e.g., the Barents Sea between Arctic Norway and Spitzbergen. The idea was suggested by Mr. Churchill.

Mr. Power, the Canadian Air Minister, recorded four apparently successful attacks by aircraft on U-boats off the east coast of Canada, and at the end of the month the Canadian Minister of Marine said that four had been certainly and two probably destroyed in the summer by the Canadian Navy. One large Italian submarine, the *Pietro Calvi*, was rammed and sunk by H.M.S. *Lulworth* (Lieut.-Commander C. Gwinner) and thirty-six prisoners taken. On September 15 the German High Command admitted the loss of Captain Muetzenberg, "an outstanding and successful commander" in a convoy action in which the enemy claimed to have sunk 122,000 tons of merchant shipping with two destroyers and two corvettes. In the same week the Canadian Government announced the loss of the patrol ship *Racoon* with all her crew of thirty-eight while defending a convoy out of which four ships were lost with 100 officers and men, of the corvette *Charlottetown*, whose commanding officer was killed and the destroyer *Ottawa*, whose commander (Lieut.-Commander C. A. Rutherford) was believed to have been killed with 108 ratings. She may well have been lost in the convoy action, but it was significant that the Germans should have quadrupled the actual losses of merchantmen on that occasion. Another example of exaggeration was the announcement by the German High Command on September 28 that U-boats had destroyed "most of a convoy of American troop transports destined for Great Britain," and averred that in the "pursuit" they had sunk three named liners and a destroyer. The story was improbable. U-boats are not fast enough to chase fast liners, and the Ministry of Information stated that the claim to have sunk troop transports in the Atlantic was quite untrue.

One surface raider was at sea during this period. On August 19 the U.S. Navy Department said that an American merchant ship had been sunk by a heavily armed vessel in the South Atlantic in mid-July off the African coast, with the loss of fifteen killed and twenty prisoners. No further mention of the movements of this vessel was made during the quarter.

Another theatre of naval—and aerial—warfare which proved costly to the United Nations, but was attended by heavy German losses was off the western coast of Norway and in that part of the Arctic Ocean which lies between the extreme northern coast of Norway, the small Finnish frontage on the Arctic, and the approaches to the Russian ports of Murmansk and Archangel. Kirkenes, on the Varanger Fjord in the extreme north of Norway, had been converted into an important advanced base from which the German troops operating in Arctic Finland were supplied, and German aircraft and submarines sallied out against convoys conveying arms and munitions to the Russians. Narvik, Hammerfest and Tromsø, other ports in northern Norway, had been organized for defence and furnished lurking places for German warships or safe corners into which the ships bringing reinforcements or supplies to Marshal Dietl's army might take refuge between each stage of their perilous journey from the south. Trondheim was the principal German naval base in western Norway, and during part of the period under review the battleship *Tirpitz*, with a pocket battleship, a large cruiser, and several destroyers, were stationed there. Each side, therefore, was engaged in attacking its opponents' convoys and in defending its own, but the Germans had the easier task since they had the assistance of shore-based aircraft operating from Kirkenes and other airfields in Norway and, perhaps, in northern Finland. Moreover, the configuration of the Norwegian coast, with its multitudinous rocky islands and deep narrow bays—the "fjords"—walled in by steep mountain-sides, made the detection of small naval craft and even of large ships from the air very difficult. The German shore-based aircraft included many long-range machines, and these visited Iceland on several occasions during the quarter, although there was no record that the stray bombs which they dropped there had done any military or other damage. They were also said to have visited the Faroe Islands. The Germans were thus in a position to be informed some three days in advance of the approach of any convoy from North America or Great Britain to the Barents Sea.

On July 5 the German High Command claimed that heavy losses had been inflicted upon a convoy sailing eastwards between the North Cape and Spitzbergen. On July 7 the enemy made still larger claims. An American cruiser and twenty-eight out of thirty-eight merchantmen had been sunk by bombers and submarines and a large number of American seamen had been taken prisoner. The Admiralty said nothing at the time, but a Russian *communiqué* issued on July 9 claimed that the battleship *Tirpitz* had been seriously damaged by two torpedoes fired by a Russian submarine, a claim which, like the German claim to have sunk an American cruiser, was not substantiated. The two episodes were in fact closely connected. The convoy had suffered severe loss and the *Tirpitz* had left port. It would seem that the convoy and escort succeeded in beating off a preliminary series of attacks by aircraft and submarines on July 2-5, although several merchantmen were sunk in these encounters. Then the *Tirpitz* was sighted steaming in the direction of the North Cape with the evident intention of closing the convoy. The situation was highly dangerous. The Arctic ice had not receded sufficiently to allow the convoy much room for evasion and it would seem that the relative narrowness of the sea-lanes through which it must pass had made the Admiralty unwilling to risk capital ships without aircraft cover so near the German shore bases. However, that may be, the order was given to the convoy to scatter while part of the escort prepared to meet the threatened attack. This did not materialize, for the *Tirpitz*, after the attempt to torpedo her, returned to her base. But she had done her work. The convoy had scattered and the ships available for close escort could not protect them effectively against the aircraft and submarines which attacked them in detail and unquestionably sank a large number although our loss was less heavy than the Germans claimed. Four ships reached their destination in company, whereas the Russians announced that the convoy had "arrived safely," which was not helpful and led the Russian public astray. Other ships which had been driven far north or east came in later.

Since neither the Germans nor the Admiralty made any mention of convoy encounters in the far north until September it is a fair inference that this German success prevented us from using the Arctic passage to Russia for the next two months. The affair left some ill-feeling behind it in the Navy, the mercantile marine and among the Russians. Without data it is impossible for a layman to say whether the order to the convoy to scatter was given too soon. It is certain that had the *Tirpitz* got within range of it she could have massacred every ship. As it was we may well have lost two dozen British and American vessels with many of their crews.

The next convoy action was fought between September 12 and 15 and a bitter battle it was. The Commodore of the convoy which, according to the enemy, numbered some forty ships was Rear-Admiral E. K. Boddam-Whetham. The strong escorting forces, which were believed to have included powerful units of the Home Fleet, were commanded by Rear-Admiral R. L. Burnett, flying his flag in H.M. cruiser *Scylla* (Captain I. A. MacIntyre). The enemy's aircraft and U-boats sighted the convoy on September 9 and in this early stage one U-boat was probably destroyed. On September 12 aircraft shadowed the convoy and U-boats were detected and attacked. On September 25 the Admiralty gave the following account of the subsequent operations :

"Next day, September 13, the enemy attacked with U-boats and made a succession of attacks with a large number of aircraft, and also employed aircraft to lay mines ahead of the convoy. The first air attack of the day was a high-level bombing attack by about six bombers, which dropped their bombs through gaps in the clouds. Shortly afterwards the convoy was attacked by between 40 and 50 torpedo-bombers which flew towards the convoy in line abreast in close formation. Carrier-borne naval fighter aircraft and the intense fire put up by all ships destroyed five enemy aircraft, which were seen to crash into the sea, and probably destroyed and damaged many others.

"The third attack of the day was made by nine torpedo-bombers. This was driven off by gunfire, and the bombers were forced to drop their torpedoes at long range. Two of the enemy aircraft taking part in this attack were seen to crash. The next air attack of the day was made at dusk by 12 torpedo-bombers. This attack was frustrated by naval fighters and the gunfire of the ships. Six enemy aircraft crashed into the sea, making a total for the day of 13 destroyed.

"At dawn on September 14 the enemy returned to the attack with

U-boats. Several U-boats were attacked with depth charges, and in one case air bubbles, oil, the wreckage of wooden gratings, and some green vegetables came to the surface. Early that afternoon the convoy was attacked by 22 torpedo-bombers. The enemy clearly disliked the work of the naval fighter aircraft and selected an aircraft-carrier as the main target, but she was not hit. Shortly afterwards a high-level bombing attack by 12 aircraft developed and lasted for about an hour and a quarter. Immediately afterwards an attack was made by twenty-five torpedo-bombers. Again the work of the fighters and the gunfire of all ships saved the convoy.

"In his report Rear-Admiral Burnett has stated: 'I shall never forget the reckless gallantry of the naval fighter pilots in their determination to get in among the enemy despite the solid mass of our defensive fire of every type.' These pilots shot down in these attacks 5 enemy aircraft, probably destroyed 3 others, and damaged 14. Shortly afterwards another high-level bombing attack developed. No damage was caused. At least 24 enemy aircraft were destroyed during the day.

"On September 15 the convoy and its escorts were subjected to high- and low-level bombing attacks for three hours by 50 to 70 aircraft. The defence was hampered by low clouds, but the enemy was harassed by our fighter aircraft when he was above the clouds and by intense gunfire whenever he appeared below them. Owing to low visibility only one enemy aircraft was actually seen to crash. During this day, after another very promising attack on a U-boat, bubbles, oil, and wreckage came to the surface. The last attack made by the enemy on this convoy was by 24 dive-bombers shortly before it reached its destination. No damage was caused, but two enemy aircraft were shot down."

The convoy had suffered losses, but "the great majority" of its ships arrived at their destination bearing the largest cargo of arms and munitions that had yet reached Russia from abroad. It had been brought through and fought through "by the fortitude and determination of the officers and men of the British, American and Russian ships in convoy and their escorts."

"The task of the escorting ships was by no means complete and Rear-Admiral Burnett turned his force to fight a home-ward bound convoy from Russia back through the area in which the enemy was concentrating such large forces. It seemed as if the German air force had had enough, for this convoy was not attacked from the air. It was, however, attacked on several occasions by U-boats and there were some losses among the ships in convoy. Many counter-attacks were made on the U-boats. The Commodore of this convoy was Commodore J. C. K. Dowding."

We lost two warships, the destroyer *Somali* (Lieut.-Commander C. D. Maud) which was torpedoed and taken in tow, but could not be saved, and the minesweeper *Leda* (Commander A. H. Wynne-Edwards). Four of our naval aircraft were lost but the pilots of three were

rescued. Two U-boats were almost certainly sunk and four more probably seriously damaged. The enemy's losses in aircraft were heavy. Forty were seen to crash and a large number were severely damaged.

There were many engagements between British and German small craft in the narrow seas during this period. Each side attacked its opponents' merchant shipping, and the ascendancy of the R.A.F. over the nearer regions of Western Europe enabled our bombers and fighters to strike additional blows which are recorded in the next section of this chapter. Light forces were most active in the Channel and the North Sea in July. On July 9 two German minesweepers were sunk and three damaged; on July 15 a large tanker was set on fire and went down, and two armed trawlers were damaged. On July 20 a British motor-gunboat was sunk and a German trawler was left ablaze; on July 26 a trawler was sunk and another damaged by our light craft in an action in which we had only two casualties, and on July 28 a patrol intercepted two armed trawlers off Cherbourg, sank one and damaged the other. Shortly after midnight on July 28-29, a small force first intercepted and drove away four E-boats, one of which caught fire, and then attacked a supply ship escorted by E-boats and two armed trawlers. The supply ship was last seen on her side and sinking, and one of the trawlers was left in flames. We lost two killed and two seriously wounded in this affair. On July 30 a patrol of light craft commanded by Lieutenant E. Thorpe intercepted five armed trawlers off Ymuiden. One ship on each side was disabled. There was another action fought by another patrol with the same group of trawlers before dawn on July 31 and a German trawler was left burning.

August opened with a smart action near Cherbourg where a patrol commanded by Lieut.-Commander R. P. Hitchens encountered four E-boats on the night of August 1-2 and burnt out two of them. Two German torpedo boats of about 600 tons then intervened. Our vessels scored hits on them and then lay off watching an action between the torpedo-boats and the E-boats which



was soon further complicated by the intervention of the German shore batteries which fired upon their own forces. After this there was a lull until the night of August 16, when a German R-boat was sunk and fifteen prisoners were taken in the Straits of Dover, and three more were much damaged, one of which was rammed and probably sank.<sup>1</sup>

There were brushes with the enemy on two occasions in the Channel in the early hours of September 8 in which a supply ship was torpedoed off Cherbourg and the escorts of another were damaged in the Straits of Dover. Early on September 11 there were two brisk fights off the Dutch coast in which patrols commanded by Lieutenants P. G. Dickens and J. B. Horne sank a tanker, probably destroyed an anti-aircraft ship and damaged a trawler and half a dozen E- or R-boats. We lost one motor-gunboat and suffered a few casualties. The last encounter in the quarter happened on the night of September 30 when we lost a motor-gunboat off Terschelling, but a medium-sized German supply ship was torpedoed and blew up.

Reference has already been made to the activities of our submarines off the Norwegian coast. In the Baltic Russian submarines were as active as they were in the Barents Sea, and shipping between German and Swedish ports moved in escorted convoys on several occasions during the quarter. The ships that passed along the Norwegian coast and escaped British attentions were sometimes intercepted by Russian submarines off Kirkenes and damaged or sunk. It is possible that the frequency of these losses explained the surprising inaction of Marshal Dietl's Army—he had been promoted in the spring by the Führer—during the whole of the Arctic summer, although Murmansk seemed well worth a heavy sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> These are minesweepers of about 100 tons displacement with a speed of some 18 knots.

## 2 : AIR WAR IN THE WEST

During the third quarter of 1942 the British aerial offensive against Germany continued to increase in vigour and towards the end of that period the American Army Air Force began to come into action in strength against the Germans in occupied France and the Low Countries. Tied by their immense commitments and needs in Russia, the Germans were unable to undertake any serious bombing offensives against the British islands. The British Air Force, on the other hand, had power to spare for attacks on German and German-controlled shipping, for mine-laying from the Biscayan harbours to the Baltic for the protection of our own coastal convoys and for the attacks on German U-boats in the approaches to the British Isles and their co-operating Arados which have been mentioned in the preceding section.

The first heavy attack on Germany in July took the shape of a short, powerful raid on Bremen on the night of July 2. After a pause caused by unfavourable weather the R.A.F. attacked Wilhelmshaven in strength on the night of July 9-10, devoting special attention to the *Marinewerft*, that part of the arsenal and dockyard where warships were repaired and doing great damage as subsequent reconnaissances proved. On July 11 a strong force of Lancasters delivered a daylight attack on Danzig, making the U-boat building yards its principal objective and losing only three of its machines. Lübeck and Flensburg, each an important centre of U-boat construction, were bombed on the night of July. On July 20-21 Vegesack, where perhaps the largest U-boat building yard had been constructing a dozen submarines at a time, was raided by a powerful force with slight loss to ourselves. Next night 300 of our bombers dropped over fifty 4,000 lb. bombs and many incendiaries on military targets at Duisberg, causing great damage. Thirteen of the machines engaged did not return. Next came attacks on the Ruhr and the Rhineland (July 23-24) which coincided with a Russian air attack on East Prussia.

Many industrial objectives were hit, and although we lost 7 bombers, 3 German night-fighters were shot down.

On the night of July 25-26 Duisberg was bombed for the fifty-second time. The attacking force included Lancasters, Halifaxes and Stirlings, and for the second time in five nights over fifty 2-ton bombs were dropped. Other centres in the Ruhr and aerodromes in Holland were also attacked by our bombers of which 14 did not return. On the night of July 26-27 Hamburg suffered an attack which Italian correspondents described as the heaviest made yet. Many 4,000 lb. bombs and 175,000 incendiaries were dropped. Our loss totalled 29 machines. After a night we repeated the attack, while our bombers also raided aerodromes in the Low Countries, but the opposition over Hamburg was fierce and 32 bombers did not return. Next night the R.A.F. shifted its attack to Saarbrücken, losing 9 machines but inflicting extensive damage. July closed with a large-scale raid on Düsseldorf, where more than 150 4000-lb. bombs and vast numbers of smaller high-explosive projectiles and incendiaries were dropped in 50 minutes (July 31-August 1). An area of about 12 acres near the dock was devastated, some fifteen important factory buildings were completely destroyed and many more were damaged in other parts of the town. We lost 30 machines. Four German night-fighters were brought down.

During July Bomber Command had devoted most attention to shipyards and factories where components of German submarines and other warships were produced. Our fighter pilots in their sweeps over France had specialized when possible in attacks on enemy transport, notably railway engines and rolling-stock. Nor were our day bombers inactive over German-occupied territory. Attended by strong fighter formations, they made many attacks on power-stations and factories. The German fighter force in France included many of the excellent FW 190 machines, and the latest Messerschmitt models (Me 109F and G), and these were manned by the enemy's best fighter pilots. The *Luftwaffe*, however, did not engage our raiders unless some operation of high import-

ance was afoot or an opportunity of cutting off a group of attackers presented itself. This was certainly not due to any failure of spirit, but must have been caused by the necessity for economizing machines and trained personnel at a time when the Russian campaign and the operations against Malta and Egypt were imposing a heavy tax on German strength in both.

The United States Army Air Force celebrated Independence Day (July 4) by attacking German aerodromes in Holland in combination with machines from our Bomber Command. Of the 12 Bostons employed 6 were manned by American crews. Three Bostons, two American-manned, did not return. After a period of minor operations over the French coast and the narrow seas in which bad weather prevented the employment of many machines, we raided Abbeville aerodrome on the evening of July 12, while earlier that day Bostons, escorted by Spitfires, bombed the Boulogne railway yards. Two hundred Spitfires shot up German troops and transport between Etaples and Cherbourg on July 15; during July 19 and 20 Bostons, with Spitfire escorts, raided power stations in the Lille-Bethune area and fighters attacked military objectives, notably German troops and transport, in northern France and Belgium. Day raids on troops and transport in the same region were made on July 24 and several goods trains were left disabled. These were followed by more extensive sweeps over northern France by British and United States machines. German counter-attacks were beaten off with the loss of 9 machines to our 3. On July 31 our day bombers and fighters made an extensive series of sweeps over France, raiding Abbeville aerodrome and inflicting much damage on the docks at St. Malo. We lost 8 machines to the German 11.

On the night of August 4 Bomber Command attacked the Ruhr in unfavourable conditions of weather. Two nights later Duisberg was heavily bombed and many fires broke out. We lost 6 machines, and as many were reported missing after the operations of August 9-10 when we raided Osnabrück for the fortieth time, combining this attack with raids on Le Havre and airfields in

the Low Countries. These were almost always attacked while Bomber Command were engaged in important operations over Germany in order to prevent German night-fighters stationed in Holland and Belgium from intercepting our machines as they returned. Less than 200 machines were engaged in the attack on Osnabrück, but over 420 tons of bombs were dropped on the city. The next series of attacks struck Mainz (August 11-12 and 12-13), Coblenz (August 11-12); various objectives in Western Germany (August 15-16) and Osnabrück (August 17-18). Of these the attacks on Mainz, during the first of which 50,000 incendiaries were dropped, seemed, from German admissions, to have been the most effective. The raids of August 15-16 were admittedly hampered by execrable weather. We lost 27 machines. Then the attack returned to the coast with a raid on Flensburg (August 18-19), and a significant encounter was recorded on August 21. On that day 11 Flying Fortresses, presumably briefed to attack German shipping or one of the enemy's ports, were flying over the North Sea when they were caught by from 20 to 25 FW 190s. There were casualties on board one Flying Fortress, but all returned to their bases, having beaten off the attack by keeping their formation and making full use of their great fire power which accounted for 6 German fighters shot down into the sea.

Before September began we had made three more large-scale attacks on Germany, viz.: Frankfurt and Wiesbaden, with other Rhineland towns (August 24-25), Cassel and Gdynia (August 27-28) and Saarbrücken and Nuremberg (August 28-29). In these attacks Bomber Command suffered heavily, losing 76 machines, but much damage was done to the railway works and the Friseler Aircraft factories at Cassel. An attack on Saarbrücken on September 1 was described as an outstanding success and only cost us 3 machines. Another heavy raid on Karlsruhe on September 2-3 did much damage, and on the night of September 4-5, a very heavy attack was directed against Bremen. It lasted only half an hour, during which bombs were dropped at

the rate of one every second during a half-hour attack. We lost 11 machines on this occasion and 10 in an attack on Frankfurt on September 8-9. Düsseldorf was next attacked on September 10-11 by a force which is believed to have exceeded 700 bombers of which 31 failed to return, and on September 13-14 Bremen endured its hundredth attack in which the U-boat yards were our special target. On September 16-17 the Ruhr towns and more particularly Essen were heavily bombed, but the enemy showed great strength on the ground and in the air, and we suffered the heavy loss of 39 aircraft. A big raid on Munich and a lesser attack on the Saar Valley on September 19-20 were much less costly.

Raids, mostly by daylight, on northern France and other enemy-occupied territories gave the Germans great trouble during August and September. On August 1 Hurricane bombers and Spitfires attacked railways in northern France, and a few light bombers attacked targets in north-west Germany by day. Bostons bombed Flushing on August 2 and on August 10 Major-General Carl Spaatz, who commanded the United States Army Air Force in this country, announced that U.S. squadrons would shortly undertake joint operations with the R.A.F. against the enemy. On that day, in fact, their fighters took part in sweeps over France. After several sharp raids by day, Flying Fortresses (officially termed Boeing 17s), escorted by R.A.F., Dominion and Allied fighters, made a high-altitude attack on the railway marshalling yards on Rouen on the evening of August 17. Brigadier-General Ira C. Eaker, Commanding the Bomber Command of the U.S. Army Air Force in Britain, led the attack in which two of the escorting aircraft and three hostile fighters were destroyed and many hits were made on the marshalling yards. During the Dieppe raid, which is described in the following section of this chapter, the R.A.F. and many Allied squadrons were heavily engaged, and it may be added here that during its course two squadrons of Flying Fortresses, escorted by British fighters, kept German aircraft at Abbeville aerodrome from intervening for part of the day by successful attacks.

On August 20 Flying Fortresses bombed Amiens railway yards in the course of a sweep in which nearly 500 fighters, most of them British, took part. On August 27 the American heavy bombers raided the Rotterdam shipyards, while Bostons and Hurricane fighter-bombers swept over North France, attacked shipping at Dieppe and the aerodrome at Abbeville with Spitfire cover. We lost 9 machines that day, the enemy only 3. Two days later Fortresses raided Courtrai aerodrome, while Bostons bombed Ostend docks and power stations in the Lens-Lille region. British, Canadian, American "Eagle" and New Zealand squadrons, with aircraft from the Norwegian, Fighting French, Polish, Czech and United States Army Air Force flew in the two operations. September 6 was a day of great sweeps over northern France where nearly 400 British fighters escorted United States bombers, and on September 7 Flying Fortresses in formation attacked shipyards at Rotterdam and railway yards at Utrecht and shot down a dozen German fighters without loss. After various minor operations over occupied enemy territory in the next fortnight Boston bombers, with strong fighter backing, made successful raids on power stations in the Lens-Lille region again on September 22. On September 25, in the evening, four bombers of a new type, the very fast "Mosquito," appeared over Oslo where Quisling was preparing to lead a great party rally, and dropped bombs on German military centres and offices. One was caught and shot down, but the rest escaped the FW 190s that chased them.

These various operations justified abundant confidence in the types of aircraft used by British and Americans in the west. The Mosquito, an "all-rounder," with capacity for 2,000-lb. weight of bombs and a speed of 400 m.p.h., had a great future. The Boston had proved a more than useful day bomber, lightly laden by comparison with the huge four-engined Lancaster—the best night bomber yet produced—but capable of dealing sharp blows and with a speed of at least 300 m.p.h. The Fortresses, thanks to their heavy and excellently disposed

armament of twelve 5 in. cannon-guns and one ordinary machine-gun, had shown themselves unexpectedly capable of beating off attack by day and were to give further evidence of their power, especially in formation. Another excellent machine of American construction, the fast, well-armed and most manœuvrable Mustang, had been adopted by the Air Ministry for purposes of Army Co-operation, but was capable of carrying out other roles and rendered excellent service over France on more than one occasion during the quarter. New types of bomb had also come into service and it transpired that 8000-lb. bombs had been used in the attacks on Düsseldorf and Karlsruhe during September.

German attacks on Britain during the quarter were on a small scale. They took two forms. There were "tip-and-run" daylight raids generally on coast towns along the Channel by single machines or little groups, frequently of fighters or fighter-bombers. At night the enemy usually dispersed his small or moderate forces of bombers over a fairly wide area and recalled them after a brief although sometimes sharp attack. The number of heavy bombers engaged in these raids was small by comparison with the force deployed in the major bombing attacks of 1940 and 1941. Indeed, it is doubtful whether as many as 75 machines crossed the Channel to attack objectives in Britain on any one night. Unimportant as they generally were, these attacks were vigorously "written up" by the German High Command, no doubt to persuade the Germans of the cities and ports which the R.A.F. were scourging incessantly that terrible retribution was being meted out to the hated "Englander." Germans are a credulous folk and they probably believed these tales.

On July 7 a "north-east coast town" was attacked, many houses were hit by incendiaries and a fairly large number of people were killed by high-explosive bombs. Four German bombers were destroyed. On July 17 London had its first daylight alert for over a year. A bomb was dropped in the suburbs but no harm was done. There were small raids on various east-coast towns during the first three weeks. The Germans claimed to



have wrought great harm at Hull and elsewhere and the British Press was allowed to mention the destruction of St. Nicholas parish church by fire in a recent raid. On the night of July 23-24 about 40 German bombers made scattered raids on the Midlands and East Anglia. They did some damage, but hardly enough to compensate the *Luftwaffe* for the loss of 7 machines. The next raid of any dimensions came before dawn on July 27 when about 30 bombers caused some loss of life in East Anglian coast towns and in the Midlands. A larger force, perhaps 60 strong, attacked before dawn on July 28 in bright moonlight. Some bombs were dropped in the Greater London area, but the main attack was directed against the Birmingham area where a good deal of damage of a non-military character was reported. Eight machines, a high proportion of the raiders' strength, were shot down over Britain and a ninth was destroyed by one of our "intruder" pilots over Holland. In the early hours of July 30 the enemy again attacked Birmingham and its environs with 30 machines. There were many civilian casualties but 8 bombers were destroyed. On the last night but one of July the enemy, who was thought to have received reinforcements of heavy bombers, renewed his attacks on the Midlands. He lost 8 machines over Britain and our "intruders" destroyed another over an aerodrome in France, about one-seventh of a force which was believed to have been composed of at most 65 machines. Our night-fighter pilots had been particularly successful in July when they had destroyed 43 bombers over England and 10 more had been accounted for over Continental aerodromes by intruder patrols which pounced upon them as they returned. The civilian losses in July were officially stated to be :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Un- classified</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed ...	206	184	40	1	431
Injured and detained in hospital ...	567	248	56	-	871

On the night of August 1 the enemy made a sharp, short attack on Norwich, and also raided several coast towns on the eastern and Channel coasts. During the next three days he made several small attacks by day and night. Single aircraft raided the south-east coast by day on August 2, hitting a nurses' home and injuring six of its inmates. That night 3 enemy machines were brought down out of a small number of raiders. There were further small raids on August 3 when attacks on Yarmouth and Cambridge were made much of by the German official wireless, 10 FW 190s shot up a seaside resort in south-west England, causing a fair number of casualties and a bomber wrecked a newspaper office in an East Midland town only to be shot down almost immediately afterwards by a pursuing Spitfire. On the night of August 4 about 30 German machines crossed the south and south-west coast. Six of them were destroyed, 3 by a Polish night-fighter squadron. That morning 4 fighter-bombers had caused some casualties by brief incursions on the south coast where such unimportant but irritating demonstrations were becoming "common form" with the Germans whenever low cloud or haze gave them a chance of approaching unobserved, and, still more, of getting quickly away.

On the whole, however, German activity diminished over Britain during August. There were occasional painful incidents, e.g., the killing of a dozen people in a hospital in a south-western town and the bombing of a lunatic asylum on August 6 and 12 respectively. Bombs were dropped in the Greater London area on August 12-13, when seven persons were killed; a new type of incendiary was used in the Cambridge district, according to the enemy, for the first time; the Germans claimed to have bombed Edinburgh on August 9 and in the third week of the month it became known that the premises of the Cambridge Union had been badly damaged. On August 28 two machines raided Bristol. Their bombs set three omnibuses on fire and many of the passengers perished. Civilian Air Raid casualties in August, nevertheless, fell below those of July. They were :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Un- identified</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed ...	154	184	57	8	403
Injured and detained in hospital ...	215	232	62		509

In September the enemy's activity fell off still more markedly and most raids did little damage. Attempts to burn crop failed. One particularly cruel raid struck Petworth on September 28. The enemy singled out the council school for attack. Its headmaster, a woman teacher and 29 boys of from 7 to 12 years of age were killed or fatally injured and nearly as many were wounded. Casualties during the month, however, were low. The official figures were :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed ...	67	79	41	187
Injured and detained in hospital ...	118	83	37	238

Coastal Command made many attacks on enemy shipping in the narrow seas during this period but these were less "featured" than in previous quarters and claims to have sunk ships were less frequent than they had been. Outstanding operations may be briefly recorded. Three small ships were set ablaze off Ostend on July 14 and another was sunk next day. On August 20 Hudsons scored three hits on ships in convoy off the Frisian coast ; on September 9 Whirlwinds sank two out of four armed trawlers off the French coast, and that night the leading ship in a convoy caught off the Dutch coast by the Canadian Demon Squadron and a squadron of the Royal Dutch Naval Air Force was left on fire. Two ships were torpedoed by Coastal Command off Norway on September 17. Much damage was also inflicted by mines in German-infested waters. Among the noteworthy incidents of the quarter was the handing over of the three

Eagle squadrons of the R.A.F. (Nos. 71, 121, 133) by Air Chief Marshal Sir Sholto Douglas, Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, to Major-General Carl Spaatz on September 2. The "Eagles" had done splendid work and left many friends and regrets. They had stood by the R.A.F. in the dark days of 1940 when only a few hundred fighters saved the Isle of Britain from the German hosts.

Of the results of our attacks on Germany during the quarter something was known in early October. It was too early to affirm that German U-boat construction had suffered a serious set-back since the spring; in some yards it had slowed down; but the general picture was not one from which we could derive any comfort. There were other departments of production where a different tale could be told. Some aircraft and locomotive-engine factories had been temporarily knocked out; the great Defries machine-tool works at Düsseldorf had been terribly battered on the night of July 31–August 1 and had produced nothing since. More important than the fragments of evidence brought from the Reich and pieced together, not always convincingly, by our experts were the Continental broadcasts referred to in the preceding volume of this series (*The Eleventh Quarter*, p. 41), which seem to have ceased early in July. Their insistence on the "uselessness" of strategic bombing had left the impression that the enemy would give much to induce us to abandon it.

The following were the respective losses in air combats or from A.A. fire of the British, United States and German air fleets over North-Western and Central Europe and the adjoining seas during the quarter. Machines "destroyed on the ground" are not included.

<i>Over and Around Britain</i>			
	<i>German</i>	<i>R.A.F.<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>U.S.A.F.</i>
July ....	55	—	—
August ....	42	1	—
September ....	25	1	—
	<hr/> 122	<hr/> 2	<hr/> —

<sup>1</sup> Including the Royal Canadian squadrons that were now being organized in Britain and which will be referred to as R.C.A.F. squadrons in future.

*Over German and German-occupied Territory*

July	....	58	251	2
August	....	119	271	1
September	....	20	194	12
		<u>187</u>	<u>716</u>	<u>15</u>

The Admiralty reported that 4 German aircraft were shot down in the narrow seas in July and that about 40 were destroyed in the Arctic convoy battle in September. Its figures were manifestly incomplete for they took no account of the largely successful German attack on the Arctic convoy in July when both the *Luftwaffe* and the R.A.F. must have suffered losses.

## 3 : THE ARMY IN BRITAIN

The raid on Dieppe was the outstanding event in the record of the Army in Britain during the quarter, but many issues of importance were more publicly and actively discussed than they had been in any previous period. The question of Service Pay and Allowances was the chief of these ; the decisions taken by the Government and announced on September 10 and the course of the debate in the House of Commons on that date are dealt with in Chapter IX of this volume ; and it need only be said here that the increases announced were considered inadequate by most of the M.P.s of all parties who spoke during the debate and by many more who were silent. Attention was directed by some speakers and also by the Press to the extreme complexity of the pay system, especially in the Army. Major Milner, M.P., in a letter published in *The Times* on September 9, startled even ex-officers and serving officers who knew something of the intricacies of Army pay by the disclosure that "In the Army alone there are, in all, nearly 200 different rates of pay."

Another cause of dissatisfaction arose over the granting of temporary and acting rank. An officer who

has held "acting rank" for a period which differed according to grade (three months up to lieutenant-colonel and six to twelve months above it) is then given temporary rank, which gives him war substantive rank in the rank immediately below. Thus a temporary lieutenant-colonel cannot drop below major during the war. But if for some reason beyond his control (illness, for example) an officer is absent from his unit for over twenty-one days, the vacancy which he has occupied is filled by another and he loses his temporary rank, however efficiently he may have performed its duties. In the case of "other ranks" there was no temporary rank, but the N.C.O. who from corporal had been made acting company sergeant-major and had done well but was temporarily incapacitated by illness or accident for more than twenty-one days saw the vacancy filled and himself reverting to corporal with a strong sense of grievance. The system was no doubt devised by the Treasury for economy's sake, but its result was to discourage many good officers and men and to encourage comparisons with the more generous system followed in other armies.

Education in the Army had been the object of much attention during the past twelve months, and on September 22 *The Times* published an interesting and important article on the work of the Army Bureau of Current Affairs which had been set up a year previously by the War Office. Its object was to teach the soldier to study and discuss subjects of general public interest. To that end platoon commanders or their equivalents outside the infantry were instructed to preside over a discussion of some topic of the day not less than once a week. They were encouraged "to take the chair but not the floor" at these informal meetings with the aid of weekly bulletins written by specialists outside the War Office, but issued with its authority. The effect of the discussions on morale was invariably good: "Many officers comment upon a sort of self-regulating quality in an A.B.C.A. session. Extremist opinion from one flank finds its answer not from the presiding officer but from the other flank. The one-track-minded grumbler or mischief maker who can

be such a contagion in a corner of the canteen is rendered harmless when he has to do his stuff in public. The forum method is a solvent not only of ignorance and intolerance but of malice as well." It was shown that discussion "need be no enemy to discipline. The soldier who opens up a brisk offensive by saying 'I don't agree with you at all, sir,' is almost dead sure to be the one who knows and respects the difference between the A.B.C.A. session and the barrack square."

At the same time these sessions revealed a startling ignorance of public affairs among large elements of the rank and file and explained why so many worthy people still seemed to wonder what the war was about, and whether Hitler was as bad as he was painted. An educational system which took the majority of young people from school before they were fifteen was largely responsible for this ignorance, but the selection of teachers sometimes contributed. A woman teacher from the writer's county of residence who was capable of the following questions: "Who was Julius Cæsar, anyhow?" and "Isn't Hitler leaving a port in France for us to trade with?" might be capable of giving children lessons in the three R's but did not seem fitted to improve their general knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

The Dieppe raid must now be described. Its chief objects were to obtain the fullest possible information concerning the enemy's coastal defences in Occupied France, his strength, dispositions and preparedness, and to test our own methods of attack. In the words of the report issued by Colonel J. L. Ralston, the Canadian Minister of Defence, on September 19 :

"Such information is available from many sources, but it is frequently the case that facts essential to the successful prosecution of offensive operations can only be gained by fighting for them. . . . It was considered most important that our forces should have an opportunity for practical experience in the landing on an enemy-occupied coast of a large military force, and in particular in the problems arising out of the employment in such a

<sup>1</sup> I fear that this good woman who confessed that she had read one Dickens and one Thackeray for her examination and had read no novel since was less exceptional than the champions of our system will doubtless contend.

orce of heavy armoured fighting vehicles. The operation also had . . . tactical or local objectives involving the destruction of enemy installations in the Dieppe area and the infliction of as much local damage as possible upon the enemy."

The force selected for the raid was composed mainly of elements of two brigades of the 2nd Canadian Division, commanded by Brigadiers Southam and Lett, and a battalion of the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade, with detachments "of all arms and services."<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Canadians the 3rd, 4th and Royal Marine "A" Commandos (Special Service Brigade troops) were employed with small detachments of United States Rangers (the American analogues of our Special Service troops) and Fighting French soldiers. The naval force included no vessels larger than destroyers. Abundant air cover was provided for ships and landing forces. The military force commander was Major-General Roberts; the naval force commander was Captain J. Hughes Hallett, and the air force commander was Air Marshal T. Leigh-Mallory.

"The plan for the operation provided that assaults should be delivered by Special Service Brigade troops against enemy coastal batteries at Varengeville, five miles west of Dieppe, and Berneval, six miles east of the town. The capture or disablement of the guns at these points was considered necessary to the safety of our naval vessels offshore and to the successful execution of the landing operations. Simultaneously with the Special Service Brigade attacks Canadian forces were to land at Pourville and Puits. The troops landed at Puits were to secure the headland east of Dieppe from which the enemy would otherwise be in a position to menace landings attempted on the beach in front of the town. . . . The main attack was to be delivered against the front of the town, after a naval and air bombardment. Heavy tanks were to be employed in this attack."

Preceded by mine-sweepers and guarded by light craft of the destroyer class and below, the invasion barges crossed the dangerous waters of the Channel undetected and were nearing the French coast, when the escort of the barges nearing Berneval suddenly encountered a German convoy moving along the coast under the protection of a number of small craft. It was bad luck.

<sup>1</sup> The units of the Canadian Army engaged included the Royal Regiment of Canada, the South Saskatchewan Regiment, the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, the Essex Scottish, the Fusiliers Mont-Royal and the 14th Canadian Army and Tank Battalion (Calgary Regiment).



Several of the craft carrying No. 3 Commando were damaged by fire from the enemy's A.A. ships (also called *Flak*-ships) and E-boats, a good number were prevented from reaching the shore and the enemy at Berneval was warned. Only a detachment of the Commando was able to land, but it did good service in interfering with the Berneval heavy battery by mortar-fire and sniping. On the other flank the attack on Varengeville surprised the enemy and No. 4 Commando stormed the enemy's six-gun battery of 15 cm. guns, destroyed these and killed or captured the gunners to a man.

Unfortunately the failure at Berneval reacted on the landing at Puits. The Royal Regiment of Canada had been scheduled to land at 4.50 a.m., but the small craft had been compelled to turn from their course owing to the naval encounter and thus only reached the shore in broad daylight. They came under intense fire and although they attacked with the utmost spirit they only made a temporary lodgement. Thus it came about that the headland east of Dieppe was not cleared and the enemy's guns were able to rake the beaches before the town.

"At Pourville, on the other flank . . . the South Saskatchewan Regiment landed with comparatively little opposition and captured their first objectives, taking a number of prisoners and clearing enemy positions. Subsequently the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders . . . passed through the bridgehead and penetrated about two miles inland on the west side of the River Scie. During this advance they inflicted considerable losses on the enemy.

"On the beaches fronting Dieppe the attack was delivered on the right by the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, and on the left by the Essex Scottish. These units were closely followed by the first wave of Churchill tanks. . . .

"Although the . . . defences had been heavily engaged before the assault by naval bombardment and Hurricane bombers, the troops came under heavy fire from concealed posts in the two headlands to the west and east of the beaches, and also from artillery under cover of the buildings. The first wave of tanks was landed successfully, but they came under direct fire as soon as they came off the landing craft, and while some immediately got on to the boulevard in front of the town and penetrated farther, others did not get off the beach. The Engineers, charged with the perilous and difficult task of carrying on assault demolitions in the face of heavy fire, did their work most gallantly. They were, however, unable fully to breach the sea-wall, and some of the tanks were unable to cross it.

"About one hour after the first landing at this point, information received indicated that the beach was sufficiently clear to permit the landing of the floating reserve. In consequence the Fusiliers Mont-Royal

were ordered to land and to establish themselves on the beach and on the edge of the town of Dieppe. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, attacking with great dash, had succeeded in capturing the casino, which was most heavily fortified. Strong road blocks across the heads of the streets and the heavy fire brought to bear from the houses and beach were obstacles to further progress. Nevertheless small parties of various units fought their way into the town and penetrated for some distance at a number of points."

It was clear, however, that further progress would be costly and increasingly difficult, if possible at all. The decision to withdraw the troops was carried out as planned in spite of the heavy fire on the beaches. All ranks behaved magnificently and the Canadian official report paid a high tribute to the courage and skill of the Navy, which went to the beaches again and again to take off troops, the destroyers closing the beach "almost to the point of grounding." Smoke screens did much to cover our retirement and to prevent the enemy's unsilenced guns from taking advantage of the crowding of small craft off the beaches. That many men involved in street fighting were cut off was not the fault of the Senior Service which did not spare itself through the crowded nine hours that intervened between the first landing and the departure of the last invasion barge. The Canadians who supplied 5,000 of the 7,000 to 7,500 men engaged in the whole operation suffered most of the losses, which may fairly be estimated at about 3,600 for all three Services. Canadian casualties were given as 170 killed (40 officers), 633 wounded (41 officers) and 130 officers and 2,417 other ranks missing. The Germans claimed 2,095 prisoners of whom 617 were wounded.

These were heavy losses amounting to some 60 per cent of the Canadian troops engaged, but they might have been heavier still but for the magnificent contribution of the R.A.F. Its task was to bomb points of resistance in the area under attack, to prevent the enemy bringing up reinforcements by land or air, to keep a continuous "umbrella" of fighters above the ships and the troops ashore and afloat and to give all possible close support to the other services. Enemy aerodromes were raided, every German machine or group that attempted to attack our landing craft and warships was attacked and

took heavy punishment. Our own losses in this, the fiercest engagement in which the R.A.F. had taken part in the West since the battle of Britain, were heavy indeed. They amounted to ninety-eight machines, but thirty pilots were saved. Not all of these were British.

"Air cover was provided by aircraft from all Operational Commands of the Royal Air Force, from the United States and Army Air Force,<sup>1</sup> the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal New Zealand Air Force and Polish, Czech, Norwegian, Belgian and Fighting French squadrons. . . . During this engagement ninety-one German aircraft are officially known to have been destroyed and about twice that number have probably been destroyed or damaged. . . . The Germans were forced to call up aircraft reinforcements from all parts of Occupied France, Holland and Belgium. Many of these . . . were engaged before they ever reached the area operations, large formations being broken up and dispersed, particularly over the mouth of the Somme."<sup>2</sup>

The heavy losses inflicted on the *Luftwaffe* admitted of no doubt. At sea the enemy lost at least one armed vessel. His loss on the ground was described as "heavy" at Vichy, and his figure of 400 casualties was a manifest understatement. Still, it can hardly be supposed that his troops, fighting for the most part under cover, suffered nearly as many casualties as the attacking force. We lost the destroyer *Berkeley* (Lieut. J. J. Yorke) which was damaged by gunfire and could not be towed away. Most of her crew were saved. A number of landing craft were also destroyed.

The Germans, needless to relate, vastly exaggerated our loss of ships and the number of troops landed. The special announcement issued from Hitler's headquarters was boastful and mendacious. It describes the operation as a purely political manoeuvre, which "defied all military reason." The German radio was quick to take the hint and the raid or rather reconnaissance was described by the German Press either as an attempt at invasion or as a demonstration undertaken in each case in consequence "of Stalin's demand for a second front." The

<sup>1</sup> Which made ten fighter squadron sorties while bombers made a successful attack on Abbeville aerodrome. The Norwegian Air Force in its first big battle did excellently, destroying fourteen enemy machines for the loss of two airmen.

<sup>2</sup> Announcement by Combined Operations H.Q. August 21.

facts did not support this interpretation of what was obviously a reconnaissance in force. It may be that we found the enemy's defences stronger than we anticipated, and it certainly appeared that the German troops were of good quality, well trained and well commanded. But had our intention been to open an invasion bridgehead in Northern France it is not to be supposed that we should have broadcast a message to the people of the Dieppe area warning them against any action that might endanger their own safety. On the contrary, we should have welcomed French support.<sup>1</sup> The raid showed that it was possible to land heavy tanks on open beaches against opposition and to cover troops and ships with a powerful "air umbrella" against hostile aircraft throughout the day. The purely tactical objectives of the operation, viz. : the destruction of enemy coastal batteries and a radio-location station were partially achieved. One heavy battery, one A.A. battery and the director station were put out of action.

It was announced on July 1 that a new Army Council had been appointed from June 16. It was composed of Sir James Grigg (president) ; Brigadier-General Lord Croft (vice-president) ; Generals Sir Alan Brooke and Sir Walter Venning ; Lieutenant-General Sir Ronald Adam, Major-General A. E. Nye, Colonel (acting Lieutenant-General) R. M. Weeks, Captain Arthur Henderson, Captain Duncan Sandys, Sir Robert Sinclair, Sir Frederick Bovenschen and Mr. E. B. Speed. General Weeks is deputy C.I.G.S., Captain Henderson is Joint Under-Secretary for War, and Sir Frederick Bovenschen and Mr. E. B. Speed are Joint Permanent Under-Secretaries for War. In August Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Riddell-Webster was appointed Quarter-Master-General to Forces *vice* Sir Walter Venning, who retired on September 11. On the appointment of Lieutenant-General B. L. Montgomery to the command of the

<sup>1</sup> About thirty French people were killed, as was inevitable, in the fighting on and near the sea front of Dieppe. The Dieppois were thanked for the "spirit of understanding and sangfroid" by the British High Command and complimented by the Germans who promised to release 800 prisoners from the Dieppe region in recognition of their good behaviour.

Eighth Army, his place as G.O.C.-in-C. South-Eastern Command was taken by Lieutenant-General J. des R. Swayne. Lieutenant-General J. A. Gammell took over the Eastern Command from Lieutenant-General Anderson and Lieutenant-General E. C. Schreiber took the place of General Marshall-Cornwall as G.O.C.-in-C. Western Command.

Training continued to be modernized increasingly in all arms. There were extensive manœuvres in East Anglia in September. The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers took shape under the popular name of the "Ree Mee," and it was stated that it would be formally inaugurated on October 1. Another product of the war, the Army Catering Corps, did most valuable work in keeping down waste and in training army cooks both to cook well and also to meet all sorts of conditions in the field. In August the King approved the reopening of the grant of permanent commissions in the Regular Army which had ceased since the beginning of the war. The Army Cadet Force promised well in spite of cheese-paring economies on the part of the Treasury. It maintained excellent relations with the Home Guard which prepared as conscientiously as ever to meet invasion or raid.

## CHAPTER III

### THE RUSSO-GERMAN WAR

By LIEUT.-COLONEL H. DE WATTEVILLE, C.B.E.

#### I : THE GERMAN SUMMER CAMPAIGN

The German plan of campaign which was put into execution at the end of June 1942 did not differ in general purpose from that of the previous year. It aimed at the total destruction of the Russian State. But it rested on a far clearer realization of true military necessity, while there was far less political bluster in its conception and management, for the Germans had taken to heart the grave lessons of 1941. Accordingly, the new assault was to be far more restricted in area and more concentrated in mode of attack. Instead of attempting to advance along the entire front from the Baltic to the Black Sea, the first sector to be attacked did not measure more than 120-140 miles, that is one-twelfth of the whole breadth of the German deployment of 1941. Yet on this frontage there were made available a mass of troops of all arms and services which probably totalled 2,500,000 and might finally have exceeded that figure by means of reinforcements; these numbers included all aviation units. Such a strength was almost one-half that of the armies which had originally invaded Russia. The chief command was placed in the hands of Field-Marshal von Bock, who had failed to reach Moscow in the previous summer.

Obviously the Germans centred all their hopes on the violence of the original onslaught, as well as on its prolongation, to destroy the Russian opposition and thereby to paralyse the Russian High Command. With that sole purpose in view this mass of men and material had been distributed in considerable depth behind the approximate front Kursk-Kharkov. But the hard core of the German

assault centred round nearly fifty armoured and motorized divisions which had been powerfully furnished with highly mobile anti-aircraft and anti-tank artillery. The artillery material available for the entire attack had also been greatly strengthened. A sample of its new power had been given at the siege of Sebastopol. In the air, a whole fleet out of Germany's five had been allotted to the attack in addition to the famous Richthofen Air Assault Eighth Corps.

It was, however, in regard to the tactical use of the armoured and aviation units that certain noteworthy innovations had been made. A few words on this topic may with advantage be added at this point since so much was to depend on the new German procedure in attack.

In previous Quarters it has already been recounted how the Germans had modified the employment of their armoured divisions on the battle-field. In the first phase of the invasion, in the summer of 1941, the armoured divisions, followed by the motorized divisions, had been sent forward, singly or in pairs, to penetrate the enemy's zone of defence to a depth of 100-200 miles and then to converge inwards so as to isolate specific sectors of the enemy's front. The latter were then to be reduced piecemeal by the slower invading troops. In the next phase of the war the armoured divisions were made to attack at much closer intervals and were not intended to proceed more than 25-50 miles ahead. Their duty was to punch a series of holes in the Russian front, now more densely held, which it was expected would be so shaken by this assault that the defenders might fall ready victims to orthodox tactical methods. Lastly, during the final stages of the assault on Moscow tanks had been used by detachments, chiefly in conjunction with infantry, somewhat after the manner customary in 1917.

Now a new method of armoured attack had been evolved which was popularly ascribed to Field-Marshal Rommel and said to be based on his experiences in Libya. The tanks were to be employed in a formation of all arms which became known in the German Army as the

*Mot-Pulk* or, in English, a "box formation." This mass of manœuvre was so distributed that the tanks and anti-tank artillery represented an exterior frame which was filled by a "soft-skinned" centre of lorry-borne infantry, anti-tank artillery, mobile repair shops and all the modern paraphernalia necessary to an army in battle. The whole was to be preceded by a screen of light tanks, light anti-tank and anti-aircraft artillery, and powerful engineer units. The formation possessed a good rate of speed and was capable of independent movement; at the shortest notice it could incline right or left. It was first and foremost a fighting organism of immense fire-power and immense mobility covered with a powerful armoured skin; it should not be confused with a marching formation.<sup>1</sup>

In the air the Germans had also modified and reorgan-

<sup>1</sup> See *Royal Artillery Journal*, October, 1942. The Russians called this formation "The Pig," because it first appeared to them in triangular form, i.e. like a pig's snout.



By courtesy of *The Times*

THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE  
(ABOUT JULY 6)



ized many units of their *Luftwaffe* during the winter and spring. Although new aircraft were coming into service these did not betray any startling innovation. There was an improved Messerschmitt 109 and the now familiar Focke-Wulf 190: a new fighting dive-bomber, the Henschel 129 which was more or less a copy of the successful Russian Stormovik. It is true that a new type Focke-Wulf 200 was replacing the older Junkers 52 for transport purposes. Otherwise the tried Dornier 217 continued to be used for night bombing in preference to the Junkers 88. But it was not the new machines that were to make themselves felt in the coming campaign so much as the remarkable organization and staff work which were to render the *Luftwaffe* so formidable during the entire summer. The aircraft were formed into "Assault Groups," which were designed to work in the closest combination with the troops and to undertake all tasks which lay outside the scope of normal artillery competence. The main duty of the aviation was to secure an uninterrupted advance of the ground troops.

The Assault Group now depended for its success on three factors: firstly, on a continuous flow of reliefs or reinforcements to the front line, a result that could only be attained by a quick and sure control of all aircraft both on the ground and in the air; secondly, an unbroken flow of reserve aeroplanes and material from the rear; and lastly, an abundance of airfields from which they could work. These points are precisely those in which the Germans showed that they excelled. At times the Russians were left all but helpless by the facility with which the Germans seemed able to concentrate a powerful air force at the shortest notice against any point of attack. Aerodromes known to accommodate but two or three squadrons might in the space of twenty-four hours suddenly be found to be sheltering many times their original number of aircraft; and new aerodromes could spring up like mushrooms on the level Russian steppe. Consequently, local superiority in the air, as well as the closest combination of air and ground forces, seemed always to be attainable by the Germans. Once in the

air the first task of the German fighters was to draw off the Russian aircraft of a like nature, and being in superior numbers this was usually an easy matter. Their next duty would be to attack every known point where anti-aircraft and anti-tank defences might be known or suspected to be sited. Then in the last instance the fighters would cover the actual attack of the dive-bombers and bombers.

These attacks would be continued with the utmost pertinacity. Wherever German troops might appear to be retreating or in difficulties, there the whole of the German dive-bombers and bombers might bear down on the Russian infantry. After releasing their initial bombs they might repeat the attacks with machine-gun or cannon with klaxons and sirens screeching at their loudest, although such great daring might be reserved to points where anti-aircraft fire was weak.

Relying on these tactical methods, the *Mot-Pulk* and the Air Assault Group, the Germans launched their great summer offensive. From the first moment of the attack the novelty of their tactical procedure, supported by a weight of artillery hitherto unequalled in this war, clearly achieved a measure of surprise which could scarcely have been realized by any other plan of attack.

The actual course of the first phase of the campaign, that is the original battle between Kursk and Kharkov and the struggle for Voronezh, was approximately the following. After some preliminary fighting of a serious nature near Kharkov that lasted from June 24 to 28, during which the Russians had lost the important railway centre of Kupyansk, the heavy main attack had been launched against and to the south of Kursk on June 28, and later at Kharkov. At first the Russians were able to claim that the German assault had been beaten back, or had at best achieved only insignificant gains. Next on the first two days of July further heavy fighting, in which the *Mot-Pulk* must have proved effective, was reported from Kursk. It was also announced from German sources that heavy attacks had spread southwards to Byelgorod and Volchansk. By that time indeed the Germans claimed that they had breached the Russian

front along a distance of not less than 200 miles. On the morrow, July 3, the Germans repeated their claims, adding that they were already advancing eastwards towards the River Don. By this time it was clear that a Russian retirement on a large scale had begun and that the Soviet armies had abandoned their positions in the vicinity of Kursk. The Germans now asserted that they had reached the Don. Although on July 5 fighting, and heavy fighting too, was reported by the Russians to be still in progress in the vicinity of Kursk, Byelgorod and Volchansk, it was no longer open to doubt that the Germans had scored a real success, and that the Russians were in full retreat. But the German *communiqués* for the next few days seem to have been discounting the future somewhat too heavily. In the absence of more definite Russian information it is only possible to reproduce the German statements. On July 6 they asserted that heavy fighting had continued to the west of Voronezh and south-west of Stary Oskol. They even went so far as to claim the capture of Voronezh, an assertion which seems to have gone far beyond the truth. They also alleged that Russian attacks, stated to have been made to the north of Orel and in the vicinity of Rzhev, had been repelled. These latter claims are probably correct since nothing could be more likely than that the Russians might have tried to distract the German thrust against Voronezh. This last-named point had in fact now become the focal centre of the entire battle. Next day the Germans stated that their break-through between Kursk and Kharkov had been considerably extended to the south, a claim which would also be probable. They again declared that further Russian attacks in the neighbourhood of Orel and Rzhev had been defeated. On July 8 the Russians put out a *communiqué* in which it was said that severe fighting continued to the west of Voronezh. The Germans repeated their claim to have shattered the Russian defence to the west of the River Don over a front of 300 miles.

Near Voronezh a terrific struggle had indeed developed. This lasted for over three weeks and may be said to have

given rise to some of the most stubborn and bloody fighting of the whole war. The capture of Voronezh was clearly intended to be the turning-point on which depended the whole course of the further German summer campaign ; but this circumstance was not yet obvious to the outside world. Certainly the Germans would not desist from furious attempts to capture the place, while the Russians clung to it in desperation. In the end Voronezh really succeeded in holding out. Consequently, the German drive during this month of July may be said to have assumed the motion of a vast swing-gate, which pivoted on Voronezh, and whose hinges stood firm in spite of the increasing pressure of the most violent thrust. So the great gate was pushed more and more north-eastward until it coincided with the course of the River Don. The situation of Voronezh and its importance to the Russian defence can best be appreciated if we compare its resistance with the collapse of Sedan in the campaign of France in 1940 : but the parallel must not be pushed too far.

No very detailed description of the campaign during the next three weeks is possible or necessary. The Russians withdrew fighting strongly, and abandoned one town after another to the German advance along the course of the Don. On July 9 the war had spread to Rossosh ; next day fighting was reported near Kantemirovka and in the direction of Lisichansk. The Germans declared they had now completed the clearance of the country between the Don and the cities of Kursk and Kharkov ; they claimed 90,000 prisoners. On the 12th the Germans were near Boguchar, while the Russians evacuated Lisichansk and Kantemirovka. Next day the Russians retired still farther from Lisichansk to "prepared positions." On the 15th they at length abandoned Boguchar and Millerovsk. The Germans declared magniloquently that "the pursuit battle continued." On the 16th this "pursuit towards the lower reaches of the Don" progressed steadily on. On the 17th German forces were said to be on the River Don to the east of Rostov. This appearance of German troops to the *east* of that city, "on a broad

front" too, signified the success of a remarkable turning movement which will be discussed later. At the same time they announced the capture of Voroshilovgrad, but the Russians did not acknowledge this loss until two days later, when they stated the city had been "evacuated."

The main point of activity now became the city of Rostov which was subjected to severe air attack whilst being approached by the invader from three sides, west, north and east. On the 20th Rostov was reported to be burning. German progress now depended on the capture of Voronezh or alternatively of Rostov. Until either one or the other of these Russian strong points could be reduced, the German efforts would be restricted to clearing the great hemicycle of the Don. By the 21st the Russian resistance in the Rostov area, so said the Germans, had been broken; but they admitted having reached no further than the city's suburbs by the 22nd. Yet this did not imply that the city had been captured, for the Russians were still fighting there until the last troops evacuated the town, going south-eastwards, on the 27th. In the meantime lesser struggles had been maintained for the possession of Novocherkask and Tsymlyanskaya. The battles assumed a somewhat confused aspect: on the 26th the Germans had announced the capture of Bataisk, to the south of Rostov, and a farther southward advance to the east of the city. Simultaneously they were heavily engaged to the north-west of Kalach at the farthest easterly point in the "elbow" of the Don. For the last three days they were stating that river traffic on the Volga was being subjected to heavy air attack.

It may be said that with the fall of Rostov the first phase of the German summer campaign had closed. The battle for the Don bend was over. The great gate hinged on Voronezh had been thrust right back, while the farther gatepost at Rostov was now razed to the ground. But the fact remains that the gatepost at Voronezh still held. Before examining the further course of events it would appear to be of some interest to study the significance of the fighting during this most critical month of the war.

The German assault had opened in characteristic

fashion by a fierce aerial bombardment of the entire front to be attacked between Kursk and Kharkov. Then the infantry moved up and the armoured columns at the Kursk and Kharkov ends of the line set to work. The Russian resistance was stubborn, and on the whole well conducted. But the crushing German superiority in fire-power and in weight of armament was too great to be held off. Consequently Timoshenko gave the order for a withdrawal. The Russian troops thus crossed to the east of the River Oskol, and without offering further resistance rapidly continued their retirement until they stood on the east bank of the River Don. By this decision Timoshenko had spared his armies the very heavy casualties which he could ill afford to hazard. It had become clear to him that if he stood anywhere to the west of the River Don he might become involved in that same "island" warfare which had formed the backbone of the original German plan of campaign in 1941. That mode of resisting the Germans had proved too costly : at any rate in material he could not run the risk of a repetition of such losses. Therefore, in his orders he prescribed to his men a double task : first, to inflict the maximum amount of loss on the enemy ; secondly, at all costs to avoid being surrounded.

The result of this withdrawal was to permit of a very rapid German advance and then to enable the attack to be spread far more widely. The front of advance was now extended to some 200 miles and shortly to 300 miles. Timoshenko had to pay a heavy price for the retreat ; yet it is difficult to see how the Russian High Command could have acted differently without running very grave risks of another kind. Nevertheless, the result was not altogether to the liking of the German High Command, as may be deduced from the following statement made in the *Völkischer Beobachter* :<sup>1</sup>

"If the operations map of one of the commanders of our armoured divisions engaged in the present campaign be studied, the following conclusion may be deduced. The German assault shot out from the line Kharkov-Kursk like two clenched, ironclad fists. The Russians attempted to check the advance on the River Oskol. In spite of their stubborn resist-

<sup>1</sup> July 24.

ance that defence line was smashed. But then the truth dawned upon us, namely, that the country lying to the east of that river had been denuded of all enemy troops. They had vanished into the Don Valley. The formation of an 'island' of resistance thus no longer possessed any meaning."

This reference to the two German "fists" undoubtedly referred to the two armoured masses, each probably organized on the *Mot-Pulk* pattern to the strength of at least four armoured and four motorized divisions, together with an attendant mass of anti-aircraft, anti-tank artillery, engineers and services, which had started somewhere about either extremity of the 120-mile front originally attacked. They were intended to create a huge island of Russian troops for subsequent digestion; but they had failed to catch their prey.

But now a different problem arose. The Germans reached the River Don and on that river the situation of Voronezh suddenly became all-important. The possession of this area could offer the Germans the choice between two objectives, both of the highest importance mainly because this area marked the junction of Zhukov's Moscow Group and Timoshenko's Don and Volga Group of Armies; and secondly, because the loss of the railways lying generally to the east of Voronezh might cause the Russians grave administrative difficulties. Consequently once in possession of Voronezh and the country in rear the Germans might have been able to follow one of two courses, either of these constituting a deadly threat to Russia. The first might be an encircling movement against Moscow as the result of a wheel to the north. The second would be the destruction of either Zhukov's or Timoshenko's group of armies, should either of these show any signs of disintegration or great weakness. Timoshenko rightly concluded that he dare not abandon the area of Orel-Voronezh without a severe struggle. Out of this decision arose the stubborn battles round Voronezh. The Germans, for some unexplained reason, did actually penetrate into the town early in this fighting, but they were ejected.

Now throughout this war the Germans had relied almost entirely on their aviation and armoured units and on the fury of their assault to break the Russian

defence ; this object they had achieved in nearly every advance since their invasion had begun. Yet every time the Russian troops, acting by order of their High Command, had stood firm "with their backs to the wall," they very often, sooner or later, foiled the German thrusts. At Voronezh, once it grew manifest that the course of events might take a similar turn, the Germans raced down the right bank of the Don, thinking they might find the desired "soft spot" to turn the Russian flank, and loosen their hold on Voronezh. But the "river line" seems to have held. The Germans, therefore, continued to move parallel to the river, seeking to effect a break-through northwards across the stream. But in vain. Timoshenko had clearly decided that this must be held. So we learned that heavy fighting was taking place at one town after another eastwards along the River Don—Rossosh—Boguchar—Kletskaya ; and finally it spread to Stalingrad on the neighbouring complementary bend of the River Volga as soon as the Russians had lost control of the southern arm of the bend of the River Don. Such is more or less the sequence of events which was shortly to lead to the terrific battles for Stalingrad.

Meanwhile, during the latter part of July, events of extreme gravity to the Russians had been taking place farther south in the great easterly bend of the River Don. Little certain information concerning this fighting is to be gleaned from official pronouncements. But known facts correspond with probabilities so far as to render the following narrative a good deal more than mere assumption. The Russians had long been preparing a fortified line of defence stretching from Rostov northwards until its right flank abutted on, if not beyond, the River Donetz. Rostov itself had been fortified. Now the Germans, whilst extending their advance along the southern or right bank of the River Don, succeeded in crashing past this line in the neighbourhood of the river. Once through the gap at the northernmost end of these defences, they swung part of their forces southwards in rear of the fortified Russian lines and arrived to the east of Rostov, as already stated, on July 17. The city's defences



could now be attacked from nearly every side, in addition to being mercilessly bombed from the air. After suffering terrific bombardments and burning in every quarter, it was evacuated by the Russians on July 27.

The German movements had been skilfully planned. Just as they had ignored the Maginot line in May, 1940, and forced a gap through the French defence round about Sedan, so now they had caused the entire Russian fortified line to crumble by destroying its two defended extremities. Such results could only be attained by the possession of a superlative degree of mobility combined with a terrific and well-directed fire-power. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that some of the troops which attacked Rostov from the rear had covered some 400 miles in little more than three weeks, and had actually initiated this great campaign by breaking through the Russian lines near Kharkov : a remarkable achievement.

Yet this was not all. By smashing the Russian defences and the resistance across the bend of the River Don the Germans had achieved more, for they now found that the southern arm of the River Don, the return limb of the bend, that is the westward course of the river from Tsymlyanskaya to Rostov, was only weakly held by the Russians. This circumstance was indeed only natural, since the Russians had pinned their hopes to a defence of the fortified line across the river bend. So the way into the Caucasus lay open. The Germans promptly crossed the river and went forward.

From Hitler's own pronouncements, and from radio commentaries too, the impression is gained that the German strategy had changed its main objective. No longer would it be the march on Moscow or the destruction of the Russian armies that was to be achieved by sheer force of arms and by crossing the River Don northwards into the heart of Russia. Now their aim was the bleeding to death of the Russian armies and the Russian State by cutting them off from their Caucasian granaries and oil wells. Hitler now prated of "controlling" the traffic on the Volga, that is by bringing it to a complete standstill. Once more the German High Command was

being forced into that strategy of attrition against which every German military thinker had never ceased to inveigh since 1919. True, it might be economic attrition, but it was none the less that very form of war which the Germans for years past had been holding up as little better than a form of military suicide. At its best such a policy could only be a sheer gamble, dependent on the possible duration of Russia's war-time economy under the stress of the loss of the Ukraine, the Donetz basin and the Caucasus. Such a trend of events was, after all, but a repetition of the Great War of 1914-18: in that war it was the inability of both sides to force a major tactical decision that had brought about the "war of attrition."

The course of events which followed on the fall of Rostov on July 27 is this:

The southern course of the River Don was crossed by the Germans "on a broad front," although Tsymlyanskaya still held out. On the 28th the advance continued across the tributaries of the Don, the rivers Manych and Sal. Kalach had been occupied. The capture of Proletarskaya ensued, and this success placed the Germans astride of the Stalingrad-Krasnodar railway. During the next few days the struggle for Tsymlyanskaya and Kletskaya continued with a display of great tenacity on the Russian side. Further south the Germans extended their hold on the Stalingrad-Krasnodar railway. They now absolutely controlled some 150 miles of the southern arm of the Don bend.

But now a change was coming over the scene. On July 30 Timoshenko was reported from Moscow as sending reserves into the battle while Stalin himself, according to the *Krasnaya Svezda*, had addressed a stirring proclamation to the Red Army exhorting the troops not to yield another single "step back." For geographical conditions alone, however, Timoshenko's efforts could not apply to the situation along the southern course of the Don. So the Germans continued making rapid headway past the important railway centre of Bataisk. On the other hand, a first German thrust towards Stalingrad was held. Such was the general situation that prevailed for a few

days. It was clear that the Germans were coping with difficulties on their lines of communication. By August 3 the advance had been resumed and reached Salsk, while on the 4th it had reached Voroshilovsk, some 170 miles south of Rostov ; this town was occupied on that day.

The Germans, however, were beginning to show uneasiness at the possession of the extreme bend of the Don remaining in Russian hands and began to turn eastwards with greatly strengthened forces. Moscow admitted that a "wedge" had been driven into the defences of Kotelnikovo to the east of the River Don and some hundred miles south of Stalingrad. Further south, near Byelaya Glina, the Germans landed an air-borne force. This was obviously a manœuvre to turn the entire Russian position on the extremity of the bend. Nevertheless, on August 7 the drive into the Caucasus was renewed and reached Armavir, a station on the railway and oil pipe-line only some fifty miles distant from the Maikop oil-field.

By August 11 the leading German armoured units had reached the foothills of the Caucasus. But a further advance towards Stalingrad was again held. The Germans clearly lacked the strength to advance eastwards and were in any case incapable of making an attempt to attack the northern course of the River Don before its great bend. On the other hand, they were making undoubtedly steady progress towards the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossisk. The Russians could make but ineffective efforts to check the German movements in this area. They cannot have had the means to do so. Accordingly, the Maikop oil-field was stripped of all supplies of oil and the wells were fired. By the 19th the Germans had taken Krasnodar, the great oil-refining centre, where the manufacturing installations were destroyed before the Russians withdrew. In the easternmost bend of the River Don the Germans began massing their troops for further onslaughts against Stalingrad. At this point it is worth taking stock of the entire situation.

When Stalin made his appeal to the Red Army and

Timoshenko was reported as beginning to employ his reserves, it may be said that a new phase of the war was coming into being. Yet the disadvantages inherent in the Russian position were very great. In order to cut off the entire German forces moving into the Caucasus it would have been desirable to attack them from two sides. Now that the Crimea and Rostov were lost there was no prospect of bringing into play a two-sided pressure against the German communications. Pressure from one side alone could readily be countered by the Germans,



By courtesy of *The Times*

#### ROSTOV TO GROZNY

and was, owing to many reasons, scarcely worth the attempt if it were to be launched anywhere between Voronezh and Boguchar. But farther away, nearer to the apex of the bend, it would be easier to prepare a double two-sided thrust against the German advance. But there the Russians had not yet the necessary resources in men and material to mount so great an offensive.

But neither could the Germans afford to allow such a threat from Stalingrad to materialize. The deeper their thrust would reach into the Caucasus, the more hazardous would it become since it would more and more be exposing their communications to flank attack. Every

consideration was driving them into an assault on the Stalingrad area, which was in effect not only an important military centre but a great nodal point of communications. It merited that much-abused title of "key position." Had the operation succeeded, as the Germans so light-heartedly assumed that it must, all might have been well with them. But once the fate of the city was not settled within a few days the situation slowly assumed a very different aspect ; it became evident that a generally unsound, or at least hazardous, military position was driving the Germans into the quest for what became an unsound remedy, one on which they were to expend a volume of military might far beyond that which they were made to expend.

Very soon the capture of Stalingrad became a veritable obsession. So in order to attain this end Field-Marshal von Bock massed a number of troops for its reduction, the like of which had never been seen for an operation of this nature ; at least 800,000 men—possibly more—some 3,000 tanks, 3,000 aircraft. Such a display of might intoxicated the Nazi minds. "In Berlin," declared the *Neue Züricher Zeitung*,<sup>1</sup> "information from every military source confirms the impression that any unpalatable surprise in the impending course of the offensive operations between Don and Volga, that space so bitterly contested, is henceforth utterly ruled out of court." Every regiment that should fight its way into Stalingrad was promised sixty days' leave for every officer and man !

In spite of it all, until the end of September—and well beyond that date as things turned out—the Germans failed utterly to make enough impression on the resistance of the Russians to justify their hopes of the reduction of Stalingrad.

The success of this monumental defence may be traced largely to the great strides in tactics which the Red Army had made since the first day of the German invasion. This matter of the tactical progress achieved in the past year merits further consideration.

<sup>1</sup> August 31, 1942.

One great lesson was emerging from the long struggle against the German armoured formations, namely, the cardinal importance of anti-tank artillery. A similar conclusion had, in fact, been formed by the British in Libya, and this also led to somewhat similar tactical change. From being—in Britain, at least—the Cinderella of the artillery world, anti-tank gunnery had come to hold pride of place in a reorganized artillery. It was a natural reply to the tactics of the *Mot-Pulk*. Russian anti-tank personnel also had now been well trained so as to act as the first line of defence against the tank. Widely dispersed, heavily camouflaged, patiently waiting, the anti-tank guns would be dug in well in advance of any main position it might be desired to hold. They were mostly sited in what became little else than a zone of tank snipers' nests in which they would only disclose their location to the enemy when the hostile tanks might be no more than 200 yards distant. The Russians, of course, in practice would have rung endless changes on this theme to suit the occasion and the ground. Behind the anti-tank guns would stand the bulk of the infantry. Behind the latter came long-range artillery. It was these last-named guns that might open a battle. The new tactics were to prove highly effective, and therein lies the explanation of much of the retardation of the German advance which set in at the end of July.

In addition certain other deductions had profoundly modified Russian tactical practice since the outbreak of war. It had been found that any town or really large village when lying in total ruin, even if it were reduced to no more than a heap of rubble, might still prove a most formidable obstacle to a tank attack, even a more formidable obstacle than when it might still be standing undamaged. Bitter struggles had already taken place at Sebastopol and other places over mounds of wreckage that had been prosperous communities—and that long before Stalingrad! This circumstance was not new since it had not been altogether unknown during the war of 1914-1918. But now the discovery of this forgotten

fact came as a grave shock to the German commanders, accustomed as they were to the rapid surrender of any town as soon as it might be surrounded and threatened with bombardment. Again, in these days of high tactical mobility and air-borne troops it had been found by the Russians that in any system of defence an unbroken fortified perimeter had become a necessity. Such had been the German practice in the construction of their "hedgehog" defences during the previous winter; and the Germans had once more proved correct in their assumptions. Lastly, the Russians had discovered by painful experience that a position prepared in depth must also be occupied in depth, for in this fast-moving warfare there might be no time to occupy any alternative line or redoubt. Still less could it be possible for the luckless infantry to fall back from one position to a "switch" well away in rear, when once a fast attack had been able to break into any loosely organized defensive zone. Hence, also, the folly of providing any massive cover that might impede an all-ground field of view or anything but the most rapid use of weapons. Fire-power must sometimes come before protection.

A wider application of more skilful and more appropriate tactical methods was soon reflected in the fighting that took place during the last half of August for the possession of the apex of the River Don bend. From Kletskaya in the north to Kotelnikovo in the south, von Bock maintained a fierce pressure, but the Russian resistance was growing stronger and was better controlled. Nevertheless, by August 23 German troops had pushed their way to the north-eastern bank of the river near Kletskaya. Next day they announced that solid reinforcements had been brought across the stream. Then to the south a deep wedge had been driven into the defending Russians near Kotelnikovo. On the 25th came the first German claim to have penetrated the "outer defences" of Stalingrad itself. The claim might be premature, but the true struggle for the city itself had begun.

Before the main issue was joined at Stalingrad, however,

the Russian High Command decided to make one last effort to distract the attention of the Germans by ordering General Zhukov to attempt a thrust along the central front, also a subsidiary attack near Kalinin more to the north. This took place on August 25. Zhukov attacked and, so Moscow claimed, routed no less than three armoured and six infantry divisions. By this success he had pushed forward his line some fifteen to twenty miles. On the 27th the Russians declared that they had penetrated into Rzhev. Two days later the Russian *Pravda* reported fighting "in every street and every house" of Rzhev. That statement was in truth somewhat too optimistic, since Rzhev survived the Russian onslaught, although the attack succeeded in retaining a useful foothold in the outskirts of the town and inside its outer defences. Soon, however, the attack began to lose its original impetus until it gradually petered out. This trend of the operations may have been imposed on the Russians by shortage of reserve forces, but more probably, perhaps, because these eccentric attacks seemed to bring little relief to the tension in the bend of the Don. Such an expenditure of force was not yet sufficiently remunerative. The Germans were also so far committed to their attack on Stalingrad and were in such force for their assault that the Russians could not hope to turn them aside from their purpose. So they again reverted to the policy of attempting to neutralize their powerful enemy's blows with a maximum loss to the attack.

The Germans, in fact, were pursuing a double objective once more, as they had done in 1941 when they had headed for Moscow while their more southern forces had thrust into the Ukraine in the hope of destroying Budyonny's armies. Now they were attacking Stalingrad whilst simultaneously invading the Caucasus. The Russians, on the other hand, were in no position to defend two objects of attack, Stalingrad on the one hand, the Caucasian oil-fields on the other. The latter, indeed, were geographically so situated that there was no option but to defend the Caucasian area with such troops as might be found in the region and to trust to victory



elsewhere in order to make good the loss of a district so rich in natural products as to render even its temporary loss a matter of some gravity.

The entire Russian strategy had hitherto depended on deflecting the German onslaught eastwards and southwards in order to save their armies as far as possible intact whilst maintaining the unity of Central Russia and the Ural industries unharmed. Their strategy may have succeeded, but now they had to pay the price for their success. None the less, they had also managed to drive the Germans into a strategic situation which was not sound or enviable. Moreover, the invaders' prospects of gaining any material, apart from purely military, advantage from their rapid conquest were none too bright. So the logic of events drove on both belligerents. The possession of the Stalingrad area and the control of the communication which it represented had become a matter vital to both. Hence the ferocity of the fighting which was to follow.

The decision to leave the Caucasian area so largely to its own resources must have proved a painful decision for the Russian High Command to make. Yet ever since the fall of Rostov and the German intrusion across the Don bend it was growing inevitable. That area at least which bordered on the Black Sea must be regarded as doomed, unless it were possible to strengthen very greatly the local defences either by sea or from the Trans-Caucasian region. Neither course was truly practicable so that the area had virtually to be left to its fate. Farther east the districts lying roughly between the Volga and the great Caucasian range were more favourably situated in proportion as they stood nearer the central Russian armies. But the problem grew all but hopeless with the cutting of the Krasnodar-Stalingrad railway by the Germans in August. When the Russians had evacuated the town of Krasnodar on August 19 it was clear that the best they could hope to do would be to hold up the German advance into the oil-fields for as long as these local Russian forces, now all but detached from the main armies, might succeed in performing their task single-

handed. Timoshenko was now working in these regions on "exterior lines" of the most disadvantageous and rickety nature. Indeed, once he had lost Kotelnikovo his position in this whole area was bad ; for the Germans from that point could threaten Stalingrad to the north whilst preventing reinforcements reaching the Russian forces in the Caucasus.

The course of events in the Caucasus can now be briefly described and then dismissed, since these operations had little direct influence on the great struggle which centred on Stalingrad, although conversely it might be asserted that the Germans were sadly in need of some of the troops attacking Stalingrad to drive farther into the Caucasian oil-fields.

During the latter part of August the German occupation of the Caucasian districts south-east of Rostov had continued without remarkable incident. They had advanced and moved steadily eastwards along the Caucasian foothills whilst they occupied the districts near the mouth of the Kuban and along the Black Sea. In the early days of September they had progressed along the shores of that sea well towards Anapa and Novorossisk. At the close of the first week of September the Germans announced the capture of Novorossisk ; but it would be difficult to name an exact date for that event, since the Russians appear to have been fighting in or near Novorossisk for many days after the German issue of the news. To a certain degree the situation of Novorossisk resembled that which had prevailed at Sebastopol, but the fighting was never so protracted nor so severe. Neither side can have had the forces or the armament to maintain such a struggle. All that the Germans probably succeeded in doing was to take the ridge of hills which dominate the harbour on the north side some days before the final Russian evacuation of the town. Seeing that this situation precluded the use of the harbour by the Russians, the German claim may be allowed to stand.

Still, the final taking of Novorossisk was indeed no child's play, as may be gathered from this—somewhat

highly-coloured—German broadcast : “The breakthrough to the harbour is being forced through all streets, in a fan-wise operation. Fires are raging everywhere ; pillars of smoke overhang the houses ; the streets are littered with dead. Soviet losses are frightful. The roar of our assault guns, infantry guns and anti-tank guns mingle with the detonation of bombs. Ahead of us we see our assault guns and with them there are our gallant infantry and sappers with flame-throwers, explosive charges and machine-guns, clearing one house after another. Street fighting advances foot by foot. The Soviets have the choice between giving themselves up or being driven into the sea.”

The loss of Novorossisk constituted an undoubted setback for the Russian Black Sea Fleet, since the port was well suited for use by a large fleet, and it was well equipped to meet its needs. Nevertheless, it could not be considered as by any means a decisive blow, for the Russians still possessed Tuapse, Batum, a fortified and well-equipped port, and the lesser harbour of Poti for the service of their ships in the Black Sea. In addition Sukhum and Anaklia could still be used by small torpedo and other light craft.

Their plan had unquestionably been to defend the line of the River Kuban as long as possible and then to withdraw into the Caucasian foothills, where their small numbers might stand a good chance of opposing superior numbers with success. They had surely hoped to hold Novorossisk ; on the other hand, it is said that they had expected to lose the Grozny oil-field which in the end was held. How slender were the forces upon which the Russians could rely for all operations between Caucasus and Black Sea is shown by the frequent reference to these troops as consisting of “Marines” ; the Black Sea Fleet and naval depots must have been stripped of every man who was fit to fight and able to be spared from actual duty at sea or in the air.

For the remainder of September the Germans made little progress ; they were probably renewing their supplies and munitions. To the south of Novorossisk the

Russians, on the contrary, seemed more active and even counter-attacked the invader. In the central Caucasus where the Germans had reached the foothills there was little change. A species of stalemate set in the district of Mozdok. It might be recorded that a detachment of enthusiastic Alpine troops climbed Mount Elbruz, the highest Caucasian peak, and there planted a gigantic Swastika flag. But winter was impending and the snow-line was already creeping downwards. The main Caucasian passes would soon be blocked with snow-drifts and ice. The Germans were in no state to venture on a formidable mountain-campaign of that type; so they rested content with making ready to move on the Grozny oil-field in the immediate future.

It is time to return to Stalingrad, where the most stupendous episode of this whole war was now running its course.

A few words concerning the city and surroundings of Stalingrad may not be out of place. The narrow strip of country separating the Rivers Don and Volga is some forty miles at its narrowest width. It is a bare stretch of country, poor in good roads. Towards the River Volga it slopes gently upwards to fall sharply down to the stream. This upward trend is compensated by its being cut by a series of queer ravines, named *balkas*, which meander in utterly irregular fashion down to the Volga. Along the west bank of the river sprawls the loosely articulated manufacturing city of Stalingrad. In 1919 it was named Tsarytsyn and contained some 100,000 inhabitants. At that moment it became known as the place where Stalin launched his appeal to the Russian revolutionaries to defeat the forces of reaction, the "White" armies which threatened to overrun Southern Russia. In memory of that fact it was rechristened Stalingrad. Under the Soviet regime it had been rapidly developed into a modern industrial city of some 500,000 souls. The northern part was built chiefly in clusters of huge factories, each surrounded by settlements of the workers. The most important factories were some of the largest in Russia. Occupying a narrow belt of at least twelve miles in length

on the river bank, the city resembled the mushroom growth of some modern American town, but it is really far more disjointed, while isolated groups of buildings spread for many miles into the so-called country. Flowing north and south on the eastern side of the city, the Volga, although broken by islands, is from one and a half to two miles in breadth, and constituted a formidable obstacle to either belligerent.



By courtesy of *The Times*

### STALINGRAD

The Germans were now concentrating some 750,000 troops to the east of the River Don, while they had two air-fleets within useful range of the city. But from the outset they reckoned without the Russian resistance, which soon developed into a most notable feat of arms. The defence was conducted by General Cheykov, Commander of the 62nd Army, some seven divisions in strength. There were, of course, many more troops employed in the Stalingrad area during this period. But they never equalled the German numbers, which, as a

matter of fact, were only employed in relays. The Russians were relieved and supplied from the east bank of the Volga.

In brief the earlier attacks on Stalingrad developed as follows : The main break-through along the Don bend occurred from August 21 to 23. By August 27 the Germans claimed to be fighting "in the suburbs." The air bombardment of the city had begun on August 25. From the outset the encirclement of the city, that is as far as the River Volga on both flanks of the city, had been planned. The southern arm of the huge jaws moved first. After having slowly forced a passage over the River Don at Tsymlyanskaya the German right arm moved directly on to Kotelnikovo, where protracted fighting took place. But in the meantime a heavy thrust had been launched from the north-west. On September 2 the Germans claimed to have reached the River Volga to the north of the city. Then the southern forces took up the attack. Already on August 31 they claimed to be within fifteen miles of Stalingrad. Next it was the turn of the centre, where on September 4 the assaulting troops were said to be at the western suburbs. It seemed as though the city were then really doomed. But such was the Russian resistance that not before September 16 did the defence admit that there was fighting in the outskirts. From that moment, for four entire weeks, the German attacks never slackened much. Relays of assaulting troops arrived only to be beaten back one after the other with perhaps the gain of one or two hundred yards of ruined buildings to their credit.

The most remarkable feature of that historic defence must remain the manner in which the civilian workers, and even the women of Stalingrad, enrolled themselves as volunteers and aided the garrison. Every factory not used to manufacture munitions was closed ; every block of buildings was converted into a fortress. The whole zone beyond the city was studded with pill-boxes, barricades, anti-tank mines and obstacles. Half-completed tanks were dragged out, sunk into the ground until only

the turret and gun showed above the horizon and were there fixed as strong points.

The spirit of these people knew no limit.<sup>1</sup> Fighting with the troops, they clung to every block of buildings in the face of every explosive terror. Everywhere loud-speakers blared out the appeals from Moscow: "The whole world is watching; Russia will never acknowledge the defenders as her sons and daughters if for one instant they should flinch and show themselves not worthy of what they really are!" Not a word would these men and women say to each other of the courage that was needed, of the fate that they knew must be theirs. Already they felt that they had become a part of the history of Russia and that death was no longer a leap into oblivion. Wherever they may have come from, that was all forgotten—no home, no ties but the call of country and of duty! So bravely, stolidly, they fought on to the end.

With such a garrison and such a spirit that animated every living being in that city, the defence was to rise to a height which even the Germans had to recognize as beyond their resources of steel and high explosive to subdue. The French can justly boast of their defence of Verdun; they may quote their slogan, "*Ils ne passeront pas.*" That defence, indeed, proved a military triumph. But never was Verdun exposed to such concentrated fury of overpowering strength, to such force of iron-clad attack or to such weight of aerial bombardment. And Stalingrad was also more, a great triumph of national character and national qualities. History can scarcely offer any analogy to this Russian defence. To do so the mind must travel back to Saguntum in pre-Christian days, where the Spaniards chose to destroy themselves and their city rather than surrender to the besieging conqueror.

As soon as the enemy had drawn near after crossing the

<sup>1</sup> The description of the garrison and the fighting at Stalingrad are based on a notable article "Stalingrad" which appeared in *La France Libre* for October, 1942, and on current numbers of the *Soviet War News*, to which the author wishes to acknowledge full indebtedness.

River Don, the Russian resistance assumed a desperate intensity. Round Kotelnikovo the Germans, taking advantage of a westerly wind, were able to set fire to the dry grass of the steppes.

"The heat grew furiously ; on the Russians there fell a rain of sparks and burning fragments ; thick clouds of smoke arose ; behind them the assaulting German infantry tried slowly to crawl over the cooling ground right up to the Russian line. The smoke screen, fanned eastward by the breeze, grew still more dense. For the past week the steppe had already been covered with German, Rumanian and Russian dead, and these were now quickly calcined by the flames. Farther and farther the fearful heat spread out until it dried all the streams, and a rare remaining spring or pool of water might become the centre of a deadly struggle."<sup>1</sup>

When darkness descended the battle for water began. Both sides were tormented by thirst. Wells were rare on the steppe. "Russ, give us water ! Water ! Do not shoot !" shouted the Germans at night. The Russian trenches replied with machine-gun fire.

On one sector a well lay between the Russian and German lines. No water was to be had anywhere else for miles. And every night the battle for water flared up anew, the victorious side filling its flasks and kettles. The Germans even turned tanks and armoured cars into water carts. They drew up in a solid wall around the well and fired furiously until their water tanks were full. That was the second day the Russians had to do without water.

Then the Russian sappers got an idea. When dusk came the Germans started the usual fireworks, sending up flares to illumine the well and the front line. But everything was quiet ; five Soviet sappers crept across no-man's-land, did their job and got back undetected.

At midnight the German water-carriers, the same tanks and armoured cars, appeared at the well. But the clank of their buckets was drowned by a deafening explosion, and the armoured water-carts were sent sky-high. The sappers who had mined the well rushed forward and soon returned with prisoners and barrels of water.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, September 24, 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Soviet War News*.



The Russians retaliated in the same coin. They, too, began setting fire to the steppe *in rear* of the Germans with incendiary shell. German troops that had come to no nearer than twenty-five miles of Stalingrad saw themselves threatened by the flames which were spreading from behind them. A wall of fire barred their way back, so they fled as best they could, abandoning all arms and equipment. To the north of the city it was the same: there Russian "guards" were sent forward to the attack. The smoke that was blowing up from the burning grass was so thick that the Russians were forced to put on gas masks before they could move. The Germans were so surprised by this new onslaught in the smoke that all their advanced tanks were lost, over one hundred of them. Not a thing remained standing on that field—not a tree, not a blade of grass. But away yonder a great sheet of flame, surmounted by a cloud of acrid smoke, still showed where another battle raged, and up to that point the contours of the battle-front were still shown by the line of ashes of the dead. The heat grew such that men tore off their clothing. On both sides naked men were fighting, men who seemed to have emerged from primeval caverns, yet using weapons of the most modern pattern. Primitive men who had returned to earth to find at hand all the benefits and inventions of a civilization that had gone mad. And in that heat their skin grew brown and black and blistered; their eyes stung by the smoke were red and swollen, until at length they were blind. Raving madness and wild panic had been added to the terror of the flames and to the fury of the weapons.

And the German reporter well might shudder as he wrote: "To-night we still stand fifteen miles from Stalingrad."<sup>1</sup>

The battle had then raged for only three weeks. Yet it seemed to have reached a climax of horror. Not a single news correspondent on the spot imagined it could last much longer. A decision must come one way or another. It must come, and soon. But no! The Russians would not yield. German press and radio both

<sup>1</sup> *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, September 12, 1942.

found it necessary to revive the shaken public confidence in the final reduction of Stalingrad. On September 18 General Dietmar broadcast as follows :

"The war against the U.S.S.R. is a struggle against the greatest military power in history. To force this enemy to his knees, as he wants to force us to ours, is doubtless a difficult task. The struggle for decisions must progress slowly. No adversary is able to delay decisions like the Soviet troops, nobody can—time and again—keep the scales in balance by the weight of his masses, as he can. But just as in so many battles the superior will and ability on the German side has at length been conclusive, so the total decision will develop in the same manner."

Next their dearly bought advance found the attacking Germans caught in the maze of the *balkas* that seamed the war-scarred ground that still separated them from Stalingrad. Roads there were none: just sandy tracks up and down these awful ravines. Tanks, guns and men toiled laboriously up and across the steep gullies wherever the Russians might have been exterminated from their path. For they fought in every pill-box, redoubt and dug-out that honeycombed these *balkas*. Each pill-box meant a battle in miniature. Sappers crawling up through a hail of lead would throw bombs into the gun slits and poured blazing petrol down the ventilators. At long last some three or four Russians might be driven out and fire automatic pistols at their enemy until they fell riddled with machine-gun bullets. Then of a sudden an easterly wind sprang up and drove stinging sand-clouds into the invader's face.

"Stalingrad must be taken; the fall of Stalingrad has become a point of honour deep down in the soul of every German soldier."<sup>1</sup> Thus raved the German Press; little could they tell what the attacks were costing.

At last they reached the outer suburbs where yet another war was waiting for them. Every street, every

<sup>1</sup> *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, September 18, 1942.

corner, had been mined. Tank-traps were waiting at every turn. Walls that seemed dead spat flame at the oncomer. By pairs these Russians, these "volunteers of death," manned their anti-tank rifles and would lie in ambush till they could make sure of piercing the thinner side armour of the invaders' machines. Brave men, indeed, who were doomed to be crushed beneath the tracks of the following leviathan. Yet, as the Germans found, every stone might conceal yet another "volunteer of death."

The heaps of rubble grew more deadly as the invader laboriously progressed. On one side of a street there stood a great four-storeyed warehouse. The Russian snipers on the upper floor took a steady toll of the Germans even as they cowered behind walls well away. So the German artillery was switched on to that top floor and soon it was gone. The Germans advanced: yet again they were brought to a standstill by the fire of that same building, this time from the second floor. Once more the Germans rang up for assistance, and at length the Stukas were set to work. Shortly the warehouse was but a heap of ruins, and burning too. With a wild yell of triumph a German storming battalion made for that mound of wreckage, only to be blasted away by the machine-guns that had survived in the cellars of the fallen structure.

In this same street on its other side the Russians were defending another like building. This time, behind a smoke-screen, the Germans had succeeded in coming up to the walls of the ground floor before their leaders were mown down by a sheet of fire. Still they pressed on, regardless of their loss, thirsting only for vengeance. They forced their way through doors and shell-holes. The Russians, far weaker in numbers, were bombed and tommy-gunned from one room to another. At last they began to retire to the first floor. A furious struggle was raging on the staircases. Doors were wrenched off their hinges for concealing machine-guns. Furniture was hurled on to the Germans beneath. Then once more the same savage fight for that first floor set in. Again

the Russians, still fewer in number, were driven to the second floor. There a renewed battle took place between men who were lapsing into a state of primitive, barbaric, fury. The third floor was again fought over. So it went on until the few Russian survivors were on the roof firing down skylights and through shell-holes at the Germans below, who in their turn began trying to smoke their enemy into surrender. Then of a sudden there was a terrific roar ; walls swayed and crashed until out of the thick cloud of dust and fire there was nothing but a pyramid of debris to mark the grave of a whole German company. Russian sappers had crept up unseen and laid a great charge of explosive on the far side of the building, all regardless of their own kind on top.

In the same street, too, the Germans had seized and fortified yet another block of buildings. The Russians, crawling over some adjoining ruins fallen against the structure, succeeded in forcing their way into the upper floors. Then the struggle between floors set in—Russians above, Germans below. The Russians poured burning oil on their enemy beneath, while the Germans were trying to smoke out their deadly foes above. At last the whole building was wildly ablaze, with the Russians trapped above firing their last shots at the Germans who tried to rush into the street out of the furnace.

And the Russian *communiqué* might say : "In one part of the town our line was withdrawn slightly."

One single such incident might occupy one entire day. Progress grew yet slower and slower as the Germans had to fight for every single yard of their advance. Their tanks were becoming useless in these piles of rubble that hid every conceivable tank-trap. Walls of destroyed structures might still conceal the deadly anti-tank rifle with its pair of "volunteers of death." The German tanks had to give up the struggle. No longer did they lead the way. They crawled behind the infantry and engineers in a timid way that smacked of 1917. The all-conquering machine had been thrust from its pinnacle by the mere moujiks and the humble workers of Stalingrad. Stukas were blind in the dust, in the smoke

and flame. Long-range artillery dare not fire as it could not tell which was friend or foe. The battle was indeed a return to the old, old methods of primitive man, but possessed of arms forged by modern science and invention.

If the German radio was no longer so confident in its fanciful outbreaks, it was none the less definite enough. "It is close, and very close, fighting. Ground has to be gained painfully, metre by metre. The enemy keeps on finding new points to which he can nail his defence, in the ruins of houses and in cellars. Use of fighting vehicles is greatly restricted by street blocks and barricades, and also by the wreckage of houses. The burden of the fighting accordingly weighs most heavily on the infantry with their heavy weapons, including assault guns, and also on the sappers, who with their particular weapons, mainly flame-throwers and explosive charges, become vanguard fighters to a great extent. The extremely important role of the *Luftwaffe* has been testified often enough. It is the most effective means of making enemy nests of resistance ripe for assault even where the heavy weapons and the guns do not reach. But there is still plenty of skilful work left for the infantry and sappers. It is their task to deal by attack with the enemy directly facing them, who is more or less safe against the German air attack. And so the attack pushes forward only step by step." So spoke the German radio on September 28.

Meanwhile the River Volga had saved the defenders of Stalingrad. The Germans were unable to cross the wide river, perhaps because they did not command the necessary bridging material. But for the Russians it proved the only road of access into Stalingrad.

Steamers, barges, water-buses and fishermen's sailing-boats no longer dotted the Volga's smooth waters. Instead, armoured cutters, gunboats, swift ferry-boats and motor-craft skimmed across the river from one shore to the other, transporting reinforcements, arms, munitions and provisions for the defenders and carrying back the wounded from the scene of action.

Always under fire, just as at Dunkirk, these little ships

played a great part in the defence. In offence, too, these river craft, or the combatant part of them, bore their share in preventing German progress towards the city along the river banks.

Fierce battles raged over the continuance of this river traffic. The Russians succeeded in building a pontoon bridge across the river. At once a furious struggle set in for the maintenance of the traffic over this bridge. A German aviator described it thus in a broadcast : "However often we destroyed it, the Bolsheviki repaired it again. Our comrades on the ground waved to us in gratitude as we returned to base. It is miraculous that we ever managed to get away without suffering total loss. Our aircrews get no rest, no respite. There are true ships' cemeteries near the shallows of the river, as the pontoon bridge is torn by bombs."

Such methods of crossing the great river could only last as long as the stream did not begin to be covered with floating blocks of ice, and finally to freeze up altogether.

In the city itself the incredible defenders of Stalingrad still kept some semblance of a daily routine in their ruins. The Communist Party still managed to hold meetings in the cellars over which lay rubble yards deep. Members were elected from amongst the incoming troops of the defence, and subscriptions would be collected as though nothing unusual were afoot. Stalingrad still produced a newspaper, one only ; but it appeared with astonishing regularity. True, it was but a single sheet of dingy, badly-printed paper ; a sheet measuring eighteen by twelve inches. But it was replete with tales such as any journalist might covet.

So the resistance continued, still unbroken.

Hitler's Headquarters were now aghast at their miscalculation as to the time required to make any headway at all at Stalingrad. General Dietmar, broadcasting from Luxemburg on September 28, could only offer the following reasoned apology : "For the first time in the recent history of war it can be said that troops are faced with the task of fighting in a systematically defended large town. In former campaigns fighting has taken place on the

outskirts of large towns. But as a rule there were considerations on both sides which weighed against making large towns themselves the focus of fighting. The attacker was influenced by the restricted field of vision and the way it used up forces, and tried to achieve a decision outside in such a way that the town itself fell into the hands of the victor like a ripe fruit. . . . The First World War provides no example of a fight to a finish for a really important town. Even large towns such as Liège, Namur, Antwerp or Maubeuge, fell or were abandoned before the actual heart of the town became a fighting zone. Even at Warsaw in September, 1939, in view of the annihilating blows (*sic!*) dealt by the *Luftwaffe*, the fight was not waged to the limit. In June 1940, Paris was, so to speak at the last minute, declared an open town. Cases of decisive fighting taking place in large towns themselves have been the rule only in civil war. That is natural, because such fighting for the most part was directly for possession of the seat of government and administration and the bitterness on both sides did not consider culture or economy. When in exceptional cases both sides possessed considerable military forces, fighting in large towns developed comparable with the present battle for Stalingrad. McMahon's fight against the Paris Commune in 1871 and the fighting for Madrid, 1936-37, are examples. It is not for nothing that the Soviets have always glorified both events in accordance with their desire for a sanguinary class struggle. . . . This gives the fighting for Stalingrad a special note of hardness and bitterness which even in comparison with the fighting for other large Soviet towns—Kiev, Kharkov, Rostov—is unique."

In spite of their lack of success, German pressure on Stalingrad was growing still more intense, until finally the Russian High Command was no longer able to resist the call for some more decisive measures to ease the city's sore straits. Timoshenko relented, and on September 29 there were initiated some counter-attacks by troops coming from the north and from the south against the flanks of the German attack. But these Russian attempts

cannot have had any very great weight behind them. As far as can be seen, they did very slightly relieve the evil plight of the defence, since the Germans extended their wings to meet the new blows.

On September 30 Hitler made another of his wonted speeches to his followers. In raucous, hysterical accents he informed them that he could take Stalingrad whenever it might please him to do so: but he added that since he controlled the Volga with his guns and aeroplanes that power would suffice. He would not squander his men's lives. Fond hopes, soft, pretty words, forsooth! In his earlier days Hitler had filled his mind with cheap and glamorous history. He had never delved into the hidden meaning of what could be gleaned from such a study. He had never reached that fount of human



By courtesy of The Times

THE RUSSIAN FRONT  
(SEPTEMBER 30)



wisdom, the drama of Ancient Greece. He had never heard of the great tragedy of Æschylus that told the legend of Prometheus: how that Superman had climbed into heaven, whence he had stolen the sacred fire of the gods and had brought it down to earth for the service of his fellow-creatures. Yet as a condign punishment for his arrogant defiance of divine rights he was condemned to be chained to the crags of the Caucasus where a great eagle pecked out the liver from his flesh that was ordained never to die. Hitler, indeed, had climbed to heaven, where he, too, had stolen the sacred fire, though not for the good of his own kind, but only to forge the shackles with which to enslave humanity. He, too, may yet find his doom on those same Caucasian summits where some Russian eagle may yet rend his living carcass—and that great bird of prey may well have beak and talons hammered out of imperishable steel on the anvils of Stalingrad.

The close of September found the Russian people in an unenviable plight. Stalingrad still held and the Grozny oil-field in the Caucasus was still clear of the invader. But the outlook seemed black indeed. It was at this juncture that Mr. Wendell Willkie, touring the world as President Roosevelt's personal emissary, made public his impressions of the Russian situation at the close of his visit to Moscow. Mr. Willkie, whose contact with the Russian leaders endowed his statements with some real authority, drew many telling conclusions from the losses suffered by Russia in the past fifteen months. Over 60,000,000 people, he asserted, were living under German domination—one-third of the total population of the Soviet Union; the Red Army was losing men at the rate of over 10,000 a day; the Russian food situation, already serious, was likely during the winter to become grim; the fuel shortage could be termed scarcely less serious, for cold and hunger together can be deadly where one of them alone may be resisted; civilian clothes were scarce, and there was an acute lack of some medical supplies.

It was, indeed, a sombre picture. No one who had

observed the development of events in Russia would quarrel with it or consider it too darkly coloured. But Mr. Willkie had much more to tell. He found the Russians fighting their people's war with a resolution and a fury unslackened by military reverses, temporary hardships, or impatience with their allies; they were, he admitted, determined to see it through. In a striking phrase, he stated that the Russians had chosen victory or death, but that they spoke only of victory.

Throughout his stay, during which he had greater opportunity to see the Russian war effort and the common man behind it than had been afforded to any other foreigner, Mr. Willkie found a combative mood prevalent among the Russian nation. What had impressed him most was the amount of hard work that was being done. There was not a single person with whom he had talked at the front, at factory or farm, whose family had not other members fighting, working, or killed. From children under ten years of age whom he found at factory benches to Volga veterans on the farms, every one was forcing the pace of the war.

How the Russians themselves judged the military situation was at that time further indicated by the *Kraznaya Svezda*. The battles then raging in the south were of a decisive character, not only for Russia herself but for her allies. The fall of Stalingrad would rend the Russian fronts asunder and would secure the left flank of von Bock's salient in the Caucasus. It would provide the German forces with time for recuperation and with winter quarters, for though the ruins of Stalingrad itself might offer little shelter, the consolidation of their position on the Volga would enable the Germans to keep the Russians at a safe distance and in the villages of the steppe, often from ten to fifteen miles apart, the great army might winter safely.

Moreover, the liberation of troops that would follow on the fall of Stalingrad would increase the threat to Russian positions farther north. Leningrad was still besieged, and though the position of its defenders was appreciably stronger than it had been a year ago, any

increase in the strength of Leeb's forces might create a very grave situation. Finally, to lose Stalingrad would be to lose the springboard for a future Russian offensive.

These gloomy forebodings might well be true. But it must be admitted that, as Mr. Churchill's visit to Premier Stalin had shown, there existed in Russia a very distinct current of what might be termed "Second Front Propaganda." To persuade Mr. Willkie of the extreme gravity of the Russian situation would be no hard task. The politician was just as readily moved by popular appeal as he himself could move his audiences by rhetorical exhortations. So he seems to have succumbed to the lure of the sirens.

Yet somehow on looking back at the last World War and the crisis of 1918, those ringing words of Foch of 1914, already quoted in the last Quarter, and then harking back over the wars of the past, the position would not appear so utterly desperate as the propagandists would have it appear. The true danger was serious enough: that could never be denied. Timoshenko's alleged declaration of May, 1942, makes that clear: "I am fighting not the German Army but the industrial output of the whole of Europe!" That was not all.

Strangely enough, in this war the moral and human factors have become almost stabilized; perhaps they might be more readily calculated than the material and industrial! A review of the spiritual issues of this huge Russian struggle is more encouraging, and it might well lead to a slightly more optimistic conclusion than that of Mr. Wendell Willkie. In the *Soviet War News* there are recounted the interviews which Mr. Willkie had with Russian factory workers. To his stock question as to whether his listener was not "desirous of speedy peace," he seems to have received answers that surprised and shocked a warm heart utterly out of touch with the meaning of this fearful war. Of Mr. Willkie it might perhaps be truly said, with great hesitation and with full respect to a great personality, that he has the mind of a child in matters military and in history. Above everything, there stands the great truth that the tenacity

and confidence of the Russian people have risen to heights which only the presence of mortal danger could evoke. To us, non-Russians, this Russian resistance to the organized power of Germany must appear a miracle of faith and of patriotism. That should be the touchstone for the future.

## 2 : HITLER'S COLONIAL POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE

By R. H. M. WORSLEY

The war on the Russian front during the summer and autumn campaigns of 1942 has been followed by the public mostly in the light of the great battles and their failure to yield the results for which Hitler had hoped. Yet another factor deserves close consideration. Since September, 1939, and June, 1941, the German armies have overrun vast areas of Eastern Europe. Have they been able to balance part of the losses they have suffered by the benefits derived from the utilization of the resources of these regions? Did Hitler succeed in establishing the "new order" between the Baltic and the Black Sea? If so, in how far do pattern and purposes of the measures taken correspond to or vary from those applied in Western Europe?

For many decades past the "drive to the East" has played a prominent part in German foreign policy. It was conceived originally as an extension of—mainly economic—influence in the Balkans, the Levant and the Near East. During the First World War "Berlin-Bagdad" was its chief slogan. Eastern Europe as such was in the background. When large parts of it were occupied by the Germans they regarded it as merely an agricultural supply-base in time of emergency. Grandiose plans for the industrialization of Russia found little response in Germany.

Since the rise of National Socialism the German attitude has changed greatly. The Eastern European *Raum* became a main feature of Hitler's political and military imaginings. The Germans were told to be

conscious of "a fresh missionary idea" and to prepare for the task of organizing, and ruling over, the "inferior races" of the East of Europe. The aims were defined long before the war. They are—according to *Mein Kampf* (page 533 of the unexpurgated edition, 1939) :

"to put a stop to the colonial and trade policy of pre-[First World] War times, and to pass over to the territorial policy of the future. . . . When we think of new territories in Europe . . . we must principally think of Russia and the border States subject to her."

The war against the U.S.S.R. and the regime imposed on the occupied Eastern territories must be interpreted in connection with this statement. It is—to use a term of international law—"occupatio animo domini" (i.e., occupation aiming at lasting dominion) and not "*occupatio bellica*" (occupation during war). That means that the present German rule has not been planned as a transitory measure, but as part and parcel of a permanent colonial policy in Europe. Its chief object to-day, namely, the support of the German war-effort, is in keeping with the ultimate aim of Hitler's Eastern concept: i.e., the stabilization of Germany's military supremacy in Europe on the strength of a well-organized "colonial empire" extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and from the Vistula, if not to the Ural, at least to the Volga.

The occupied Eastern territories have not been subjected to a uniform administration. They are divided into four parts, three of which (the Polish "General-gouvernement," the "Ostland" and the districts bordering the Russian front) are under the sovereignty of the Reich, whereas the fourth (Transdnistria and Bukovina) is under Rumanian rule. Little is known of the latter. Bukarest's boast that the areas in question have been incorporated into "Greater Rumania" and are under the exclusive authority of Marshal Antonescu's Cabinet, must be read in the light of the Germans' domination of Rumania and their special control over and round Odessa. For all practical purposes it may be assumed that conditions in Transdnistria are similar to those prevailing, for instance, in the German General-Commissariat of the Ukraine.

The situation in German-occupied Eastern countries is fairly clear, though the constituent parts differ much in structure and organization. The "Generalgouvernement" and "Ostland" are under civil control, save the districts near the front. Governor-General Frank, as the supreme authority in the "Generalgouvernement," is directly responsible to Hitler, and not to the "Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories" in Berlin, of which Rosenberg is in charge. He rules "Ostland." The military administration near the front is under the German Supreme Command (O.K.W.). Neither Frank nor Rosenberg has any say here.

Though at first sight the picture seems to be one of an irritating complexity, the aims in view and the principles followed for their achievement are the same. Eastern Europe is to be welded into a solid unit, the inhabitants of which must conform with the well-known Nazi demands, viz.: (1) unconditional acknowledgment of German leadership and Teutonic supremacy; (2) acceptance of a position of national dependence and racial inferiority; (3) co-operation in the economic exploitation of their own resources for the benefit of the Reich and German Europe—but with no claim to a share therein. Nevertheless "the Eastern peoples" (according to Rosenberg, June 12, 1942) "owe a debt to the German Armed Forces who have saved them from biological extinction."

The development of their resources will be "Europe's common task" and their "salvation," which is, "a German mission," will be placed "under the protection of the nation who has won for itself, by honest fighting, the right, nay, the duty, to give that protection."

The evidence available leaves no doubt as to the meaning of this policy. It is equally disastrous to "inferior alien races" such as Poles, White Russians, Ukrainians, as to "acknowledged aryan" of Baltic nationality. Take, for instance, the "Generalgouvernement." The incorporation of all the important western districts of Poland in Germany (such as Poznan, Upper Silesia, Lodz, etc.) has not only been a fatal blow to Polish industrial capacity but has also impaired Polish self-sufficiency in food. In

every branch of life the plight of the victims is appalling. This applies particularly to Poles and Jews, but does not exclude members of formerly courted nations such as Ukrainians or Ruthenians who are played off against each other without enjoying a minimum of civil rights.

The legal structure of the "Generalgouvernement" as "a state," and in its relations to the Reich is more than obscure. Hitler has called it *Vorplatz des Reiches* (Germany's front courtyard), Frank; *Nebenland* (by-country), whereas the German Postal Administration in the east uses a stamp marked "German Reich—Generalgouvernement." According to official statements, it is a new international form which cannot be explained by the traditional terms of international Law! Its internal legal structure is equally obscure. "The 'Generalgouvernement' enjoys 'natural self-government,' but not legal self-government," is another cryptic official pronouncement. In intelligible language that means that occasionally Polish officials (mainly small-town mayors, etc.) run municipal government "in accordance with the German interest," or work as minor officials in the civil government. But both Frank's central administration and the administration of the five districts (Cracow, Warsaw, Radom, Lublin and Galicia) are run by Germans exclusively. The so-called "Chief Polish Committee" (*Polnischer Hauptausschuss*), with its sixty-one subsidiary committees and one thousand and fifty offices (*Delegaturen*), are bodies mainly concerned with social welfare, health, minor questions of education, etc. The Ukrainian Chief Committee, the Ruthenian Committee, the Jewish Council and the Jewish Social Self-Help organization in the ghettos, perform similar tasks.

In all major issues of public life German rule is exclusive. The Germans lay down the line of policy according to the requirements of the German Supreme Command, of Himmler, the Minister in charge of "securing the German race" (*Sicherung des deutschen Volkstumes*), and the German economic authorities, which means that civil and local government, police, legislation, judiciary and

economics are under German direction, Polish powers having been reduced to a minimum.

This state of affairs prevails everywhere in the occupied Eastern Territories irrespective of the volume of self-governing rights accorded to the respective countries. The Baltic States, for instance, enjoy privileges. The German Press and officials speak of "home rule" in this area. Dr. Mäe has been appointed Director-General of Estonia, Generals Kubiliunas and Dankers are the respective heads of the Lithuanian General Council and the General Directorate of Latvia. In theory, their authority—based on the "leadership principle"—covers the sphere of civil government, including education, legislation, judiciary and economics—subject to the acceptance of German overlordship. In practice the German machinery of government in the Baltic States continues to run. Neither the General Commissars and their staff, nor the German Courts, have experienced any limitation of their authority. German nationals continue to enjoy special, almost extra-territorial rights; so do the Nazi Party, the National Socialist *Führercorps Ost*, not forgetting the *Gestapo* and the German SS "on duty in the 'Ostland.'"

There is evidently no intention from Hitler's part to re-establish even Baltic independence in German Europe. The official view seems to be that "the Baltic countries—though they turned away from Russia and Asia during 1918-19—have proved their inability to stand alone by the difficulties they experienced between 1919 and 1939. They are a kind of political no-man's-land which is untenable in this epoch of *Grossräume*, and so requires German protection." But even the Berlin *Lokal Anzeiger* admitted (November 5, 1942) that

"the general situation and the individual privation in the Baltic States to date is perhaps more severe than it had been under the Soviets."

Conditions in the Reich Commissariats of White Russia and Ukraine—which also belong to "Ostland"—are much worse. No measure of equality to the Germans is accorded to either nation. The White



Russians are considered unfit for even limited self-government because they had been a permanent constituent of the U.S.S.R. Even the Ukrainians of the Reich Commissariat are treated differently from the Ukrainians in the Galician district of the "Generalgouvernement." In November, 1941, it was publicly stated that "the establishment of an independent Ukrainian State is no longer in the interest of the Reich." The respective Reichs Commissars with their staffs of General Commissars and District Commissars have, in fact, almost unlimited authority. Native "White Russian Advisers" attached to the various offices have their official status and may give their views. The German Administration, however, is neither bound to consult them nor to follow their advice. This applies more or less to native collaboration in the administration of the Ukraine. The only difference is that municipal government is mostly Ukrainian, and that a "Ukrainian Militia" performs the duties of an auxiliary police.

It goes without saying that the Jewish population is still worse off. Its numbers have increased owing to the influx of deported Central and Western European Jews. The Jews are herded in ghettos surrounded by barbed wire, wear yellow badges, have no liberty of movement, are barred from the professions, trade and any skilled labour—unless classified as "war-essential." But they are under labour conscription and forced to work twelve to sixteen hours daily, with minimum wages and rations.

It is with regard to these unfortunate people and in connection with the general "cultural aspect" that the inhumanity of German racial policy is particularly obvious. Save in the Baltic States, the native intelligentsia is being deliberately destroyed. Instruction, even training as an artisan, is made dependent on special permits issued only to quislings. German social intercourse with the Eastern nations is made a crime and is punished accordingly. That the respective Pole, Ukrainian, White Russian, Ruthene or Jew is equally punished goes without saying. Though all these people work longer hours than the Germans, food and fuel are apportioned to them only

in fractions of the German rations, Poles and their Slav kin obtaining half, Jews a quarter thereof. The millions of *Ostarbeiter* (Eastern workers) in the Reich are still more outlaws than in their own country. They live in a bondage ordained for the duration of the war without any claim to a day off or a holiday, social services or overtime payment. The Germans boast of the betterment of social conditions which they have introduced in the occupied territories. They praise the "new" health services, the educational facilities (working on Nazi lines), the increase in book production (mainly in the Baltic States) and in broadcasts, Press and films. But neither compulsory inoculation against epidemics, nor the elaborate German road and town building (the latter devoted to quarters exclusively reserved for *Volksdeutsche*, such as Brown Houses, Adolf Hitler Schools, etc.), nor—for that matter—the hundred and fifty-six Ukrainian dailies and periodicals or the three hundred and fifty picture theatres of the *Zentral Filmgesellschaft Ost G.m.b.H.*, affect the basic inequality and the humiliation of Eastern-European men.

The contrast between the brilliancy of the technical performance and the complete de-humanization of outlook is without parallel even in German records. Compared with the occupied Eastern territories, the "new order" in Western Europe seems almost a paradise! This applies to economic exploitation as well as to the aforesaid political and social conditions. The occupied countries of Western Europe were burdened with the high cost of the Army of Occupation and with collaboration in the German industrial and agricultural war effort. They could not prevent extensive German penetration in banking, trade and commerce by means of "Aryanization." The tribute extracted from Poland and the "Ostland" is much higher. It must be paid in men and material. Not less than two hundred and thirty-eight German Labour Exchanges are busy in the "Ostland" and in the districts under the military economic "Staff-Ost." They have sent over 1,500,000 workers to the Reich—not counting Polish and Russian prisoners of

war. The national wealth under direct German exploitation varies between one-fifth to one-quarter of the total in the Baltic States, roughly half in the "Generalgouvernement"; from 80 to 90 per cent in the Reich Commissariats of the Ukraine and White Russia, and still more in the districts under military control. State property in the Polish districts incorporated into the Reich was formally taken over; in the "Generalgouvernement" it was put under German administration which, however, refused to be regarded as the legal successor of the previous owner. In practice this amounted to taking over the business assets but not its liabilities!

This state of affairs was even more pronounced in the territory formerly under Russian rule. The first German act here was the solemn restoration of the principle of private ownership. That did not mean that the so-called denationalization started forthwith. Not even in the Baltic States, where Russian government had not lasted more than a year, has the *status quo ante* been restored to any extent. For all practical purposes the German Government and German and German-European Monopoly Companies have stepped in where the Russians left. Finance, production, distribution are in their hands. The profits are pocketed by them. Urban property in the Baltic States, small farms and businesses have been restored to former owners. But the big estates, industrial works, mines, etc., remain under German administration. The Germans have also taken over most formerly Jewish business. The *Verwaltungs-und Verwertungsgesellschaft fuer das Baltenvermoegen, Berlin*, the *Haupttreuhandsgesellschaft, Ost*, the *Ostdeutsche Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft*, and other polysyllabic bodies, with the Dutch East Company, the Danish East Company, and so forth, hold economic sovereignty. They may be divided into four classes: (1) official monopoly companies set up and run by the Reich like the *Z.O. (Zentralhandelsgesellschaft Ost* for agricultural supply and demand); (2) bodies belonging to the so-called "new Hansa," such as the *Foerderungsgesellschaft Deutscher Handelsunternehmen* in White Russia; (3) Eastern branches of German com-

panies which are adopted as so-called *Patenbetriebe* and engaged in trade and production between the Reich and their respective districts ; (4) European monopoly companies like the Dutch East Company, which is to arrange the settlement of Dutch farmers and artisans in Eastern Europe, and its likes.

The duty of the occupied Eastern territories is to become Germany's larder. The plans of the *Reichsnährstand* for the "Generalgouvernement," and Rosenberg's *Agrarordnung* for the "Ostland" work to this end. A new policy of cultivation has been devised ; new seeds, livestock, agricultural machinery have been introduced ; special agricultural leaders of the Ostcorps are charged with the appropriate training of the population. The Russian "Model statute of the Agrarian Artel" was annulled, the "Kolkhozy" were distributed mostly among farming co-operatives, to a minor extent among individual farmers. Schemes of cultivation and distribution of production were made compulsory, deliveries beyond the fixed minimum being rewarded by premiums of additional rations. These were available in "premium-shops," representing a special class of shop such as the "shops for German supplies," etc.

Results are difficult to judge. The Germans claim that they are supplying their armies in Russia with food from the "Ostland," and that during this winter they may also furnish them with coal from the Donetz basin. They also claim an improvement in the food supply of the Reich from Eastern production. The first claim is probable, the second less so. The extreme hardships of the East-European peasants have set free food for the German troops in Russia. That has helped the German war potential a little ; yet the starvation of Europe continued unabated.

The "new order" between the Baltic and the Black Sea demands close attention. It is more primitive than the corresponding organization in Western Europe, more brutal, but technically, perhaps, more efficient. As the first visible record of Nazi colonial policy in Europe it cannot stand comparison with the methods

and the spirit of government of any of the great Colonial Powers which the Reich has so often denounced. It shows no trace of such ideals as national or international trusteeship, leading to eventual independence and to the "collaboration of autonomous communities equal in status and in no way subordinate one to another" which have found expression in the Mandatory Clauses of the Covenant or in the Statute of Westminster. The utter dehumanization of the Nazi conception stands starkly out. It is, indeed, a "Black Record."

## CHAPTER IV

### EGYPT AND MALTA

#### I : MALTA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

The successful defence of Egypt and of Malta marked the three months which followed the loss of Mersa Matruh. The two events were to some degree interdependent. On our retention of Malta with its docks, harbours and aerodromes largely depended our ability to harass and injure the communications between the Axis forces in Libya and the Axis bases in Sicily and Peninsular Italy. The loss of Egypt would convert Malta from a link in a chain to the last link in a piece of broken chain. The chain held. The story of its resistance is told in this chapter. The first section deals with the defence of Malta and the war waged on the sea communications of the Axis by the warships and aircraft of the United Nations. Our attacks on the enemy's bases and land communications in North Africa are chronicled, together with the numerous actions on the Alamein front, in the next section.

During the opening days of July Malta was heavily attacked by night and day by the *Luftwaffe* and by the Italian air fleet. Relatively large numbers of hostile aircraft were engaged and on some days alerts were almost continuous. The defence was as vigorous as ever. By July 12, eighty-two Axis aircraft had been brought down over and around the island, twenty-one of them in the twenty-four hours ending at 7 p.m. on July 8. By 7 p.m. on July 13 ninety-eight had been brought down and the defenders scored their "century" next day.

On July 18 the Air Ministry announced that Air Marshal H. P. Lloyd, who had been in command of the R.A.F. in the Mediterranean (Malta Command) for a

year, had been succeeded by Air Vice-Marshal K. Park, who had commanded the 11th Fighter Group in the Battle of Britain. Air Marshal Lloyd was to be transferred to another important post. He had commanded the R.A.F. in Malta through a most critical period with rare success and it was significant that the *Luftwaffe* who, a year ago, had been still disposed to believe that the air and ground defences could be beaten down by dint of hard and continuous pounding, were now beginning to speak of the island as an unsinkable aircraft carrier, and to doubt the prospect of its reduction save by blockade or by the hazardous methods of sea and parachute attack.

The resistance of the fortress explained their doubts. On July 22 the total of Axis machines shot down over Malta in July reached 113. The loss of 12 machines (11 Germans) on July 27 raised the total to 140. By the end of July 152 enemy aircraft had been destroyed during the month, a score only two below that of the "record" of 154 in April, 1942. The losses of the civilian population in July were 84 killed or mortally wounded and 111 seriously injured. In addition 187 people were slightly hurt. In August the enemy continued his attacks, but (to judge from the reports of his losses) they were rather less intense than in July.

Now came the fifth and greatest of the engagements fought by the Navy and the R.A.F. to protect the Malta convoy since July, 1941. The island needed munitions, provisions and arms. It produced no food save fruit and vegetables. It required a steady supply of ammunition for its numerous A.A. batteries which had been continually in action for months. The R.A.F. also needed new machines to take the place of aeroplanes which had been worn out in service or damaged or destroyed in the frequent bombings of the island aerodromes. Reliefs for some of the military garrison and the R.A.F. who had been subjected to a terrific strain of late had also to be transported to the island. But the task of the escorts of our convoys had become increasingly difficult. The enemy's U-boats, German and Italian, were more numerous; the Italian mosquito craft were showing more

enterprise under German control; the German air squadrons in Sicily and Southern Italy were no less vigilant and active than they had been in the spring; the Italian battle fleet was believed to have been increased by the accession of two capital ships.<sup>1</sup>

Our own position in the Eastern Mediterranean was relatively weaker, owing to the consequences of the loss, first of Crete and finally of the whole sea-coast and its nearer hinterland from Tobruk to a point less than fifty miles from Alexandria and also to the demands of the Far Eastern campaign. Our naval forces in the Eastern Mediterranean could not yet be reinforced in accordance with the needs of the situation and may have been weakened by detachment of ships to the Indian Ocean. The recurrent relief of Malta had become a dangerous operation and a costly one, yet the immense value and importance of the stronghold made its effective defence and periodical relief a strategical necessity, while its valiant garrison and inhabitants could not be deserted without an immense loss of prestige.

On August 10, therefore, a large convoy set out from Gibraltar with a powerful escort under the command of Acting Vice-Admiral E. N. Syfret, who flew his flag in H.M.S. *Nelson*. According to an Italian announcement there were "over twenty" merchantmen in the convoy and they were escorted by three battleships, four aircraft carriers and numerous cruisers and destroyers. Next day came the first attack. In the afternoon a U-boat succeeded in hitting H.M. aircraft-carrier *Eagle* (Captain L. D. Mackintosh) with four torpedoes. She sank rapidly, but her captain, 67 officers and 862 ratings were rescued by our destroyers in spite of the masses of fuel oil that welled out from the wounded ship. This submarine was believed to have been identical with one which the destroyer *Wolverine* (Lieutenant-Commander P. Gretton) rammed and destroyed not long afterwards. Shortly before dark in August 11 enemy dive-bombers and torpedo-carrying aircraft attacked the convoy but were beaten off and several of them were destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> *Roma and Impero*.



The Admiralty's account of the operations published on August 19 continued :

"Throughout Wednesday, August 12, the enemy attacked continuously with a large number of bombers, dive-bombers, torpedo-carrying and fighter aircraft and with U-boats. Losses were suffered by the convoy. It is known that by the evening of this day thirty-nine enemy aircraft were destroyed, five were probably destroyed, and nine possibly destroyed by our carrier-borne naval aircraft, and that another U-boat had been destroyed by H.M.S. *Pathfinder* (Commander E. A. Gibbs) and H.M.S. *Ithuriel* (Lieut.-Commander D. H. Maitland-Makgill-Crichton). The task of fighting the convoy through the Sicilian Channel to Malta in the final stage of the operation devolved upon Rear-Admiral Burrough's force,<sup>1</sup> with such protection as could be provided by long-range R.A.F. fighters from Malta.

"During the night of August 12-13 the enemy attacked with a large number of E-boats, at least two of which are known to have been sunk. The hazard to the convoy and its escort at this stage of the passage was increased by the extensive mining carried out by the enemy, so that a channel had to be swept for the passage of the convoy and escort.

"During the night, the cruiser H.M.S. *Manchester* was seriously damaged by a torpedo or mine. As already announced by the Admiralty<sup>2</sup> the ship subsequently sank, but the great majority of the ship's company is known to be safe. Loss and damage were also suffered by the convoy. Soon after dawn on August 13 the enemy renewed the attack on the convoy from the air. At this stage the Royal Air Force, operating from Malta, were able to give increased fighter protection to the convoy."

This protection unquestionably was of great service. Indeed without it the losses of convoy and escort might have been disastrously heavy. The naval losses besides the *Eagle* and the *Manchester* (Captain H. Drew) were the anti-aircraft cruiser *Cairo* (Captain C. G. Hardy), which was torpedoed by a U-boat, and the destroyer *Foresight* (Lieutenant-Commander R. Fell), which was hit by torpedo from an aircraft and had to be sunk after a twelve-hours' tow. Casualties on the *Eagle*, *Cairo* and *Foresight* were light. Most of the *Manchester's* complement were reported to be safe. Three officers and 142 ratings were picked up by British ships. A large number reached the coast of Tunis, where they were interned by the French authorities.<sup>3</sup> No figures of the losses of the convoy were published, but the total number of merchantmen sunk was less than the Axis estimate of nine or ten ships.

<sup>1</sup> "Light forces and close escort," according to the opening paragraph of the announcement.

<sup>2</sup> On August 14.

<sup>3</sup> Who treated them well but would not allow them to travel by day or to speak to the civil population.

Two U.S. vessels were among them. Others were damaged, among them the American tanker *Ohio* which struggled into Malta at two knots' speed after being twice torpedoed, having her engine-room wrecked and sustaining a series of bombing attacks, during which her gunners shot down an enemy aeroplane. Her master, Captain D. W. Mason, was awarded the George Cross.

During the action, according to an Admiralty statement issued on August 14, a force of Italian cruisers

"concentrated in the Tyrrhenian Sea and steered to the southward as if to attempt to interfere with the passage of our convoy. The enemy cruiser force, however, never came within range of our ships, and turned back on being attacked by aircraft. Results of this attack were not observed. The enemy cruisers were intercepted and attacked on their way back to harbour by one of our submarines under the command of Lieutenant A. C. G. Mars, R.N. Two hits with torpedoes were scored on the enemy cruisers."

Of these one was afterwards seen with sixty feet of her bows wrecked. Besides four vessels sunk by our warships<sup>1</sup> and 39 aircraft certainly felled by our carrier-borne aircraft, 17 hostile machines were destroyed by A.A. fire and there were 10 more "probables." Ten more fell victims to our Spitfires coming up from Malta. The Axis loss in aircraft therefore amounted to at least 66 machines against our 8 brought down in air combat plus those lost with H.M.S. *Eagle*. Some of her aircraft were already in the air when she was hit and landed on other carriers. The Italians only admitted that thirteen of their own aircraft had been lost—they did not mention their allies' losses—but confessed that "many . . . returned with dead and wounded on board." Such was the material balance-sheet of this struggle. The arrival of the convoy relieved Malta of anxiety for some time to come and was hailed with joy by vast crowds of Maltese who lined the sea coast and had been praying for the safety of ships and men throughout the dangerous voyage.

With the arrival of the convoy the Axis air offensive against Malta declined. Fifty-two German and Italian machines were destroyed in August, bringing the total since June 10, 1940, to 939. Of these our A.A. gunners

<sup>1</sup> Two E-boats, a U-boat and the Italian submarine *Cobalto*,

accounted for 227. In early September the enemy attempted fighter sweeps over the island, but these met with little success and added to the enemy's losses as did several relatively light bombing raids. September 8 was Malta's national day.<sup>1</sup> It was celebrated with enthusiasm by the islanders who received warm messages of congratulation from Lord Cranborne, Admiral Harwood, and heard an eloquent broadcast from Cardinal Hinsley. On September 13 Lord Gort, the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, presented the people with the George Cross which the King had conferred on them in April. It was a touching ceremony, held among ruins, and it was from the wrecked Palace that Lord Gort came to present the Cross to Sir George Borg, Chief Justice of the island. It was taken through every town and village, and it was announced that on the conclusion of peace it would be placed in St. John's Pro-Cathedral which had astonishingly escaped destruction. In presenting the Cross, Lord Gort said :

"How you have withstood for many months the most concentrated bombing attacks in the history of the world is the admiration of all civilized peoples. Your homes and your historic buildings have been destroyed and only their ruins remain as monuments to the hatred of a barbarous foe. The Axis Powers have tried again and again to break your spirit, but your confidence in the final triumph of the United Nations remains undimmed . . ." The Chief Justice in reply said : "It is with a deep sense of gratitude, determination to win, and loyalty towards our King-Emperor, whom may Almighty God long preserve, that I receive this cherished treasure. It will be handed down to posterity as a tangible symbol of Malta's union to the great and invincible nation whose protection is the best guarantee of our safety, of our country, and of our religion."

The decline in the enemy's offensive vigour over Malta continued during September. Raids were less frequent and the offensive sweeps of fighter aircraft in which the Axis Air Command in the Mediterranean indulged seemed to be designed for reconnaissance and to draw fire from the A.A. batteries rather than to close with the fighter squadrons defending Malta. A further dozen were brought down during September, and at the end of the month Malta G.C. was nearing its three thousandth alert.

<sup>1</sup> The anniversary of the raising of the siege by the Turks in 1565.

Attacks by our submarines and aircraft on Italian convoys bearing reinforcements and stores to Rommel were unremittingly pressed during the quarter, although August and September were by no means favourable months for submarine operations in the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup> On July 10 the Admiralty announced that a submarine commanded by Lieutenant H. S. Mackenzie, had destroyed a medium-sized merchantman in convoy and an auxiliary vessel. The loss of three more hostile supply ships to two submarines commanded by this officer and Commander J. W. Dinton, was announced in Cairo on July 23. On August 5 an Admiralty *communiqué* stated that a steamer of 800 tons had been destroyed and a supply ship damaged and driven ashore on the Sardinian coast by a submarine commanded by Commander B. Bryant. An announcement issued on August 18 mentioned further successes during operations wherein three of our submarines were engaged. Two supply ships, one a large vessel, were sunk or left sinking and two more seriously damaged by hits.

On August 22, however, came news of a serious loss. H.M. submarine *Upholder* (Lieutenant-Commander M. D. Wanklyn, V.C.) had not returned from her twenty-fifth Mediterranean cruise and was given up as lost. In the course of her cruises her commander had made over thirty attacks on enemy vessels, twenty-three of which had been successful, and he had set a notable example of skill, discipline and courage. Another of our submarines, H.M.S. *Urge* (Lieutenant-Commander E. P. Tomkinson), was reported missing on September 20, and there was reason to believe that she had met her end in the Mediterranean, where she had done good service.

On August 24 an Italian supply ship was bombed successfully by our long-range aircraft and stopped. A British submarine working in combination with the bombers then torpedoed and sank her. On August 30 an Admiralty *communiqué* stated that a big tanker and a supply ship had been sunk by British submarines, and

<sup>1</sup> In consequence of the calm surface and clearness of the sea. Cf. *The Fourth Quarter*, p. 168.

on September 27 the Admiralty recorded further successful operations in which five British submarines had been engaged and five large Italian supply ships had been certainly, and two probably, sunk.

The needs of the Egyptian front and the greater distance between our aerodromes and the Central narrows of the Mediterranean prevented our bombing aircraft from going as far afield so frequently during the quarter as they had done while we were still in occupation of part of Cyrenaica. Nevertheless, British and American long-range bombers delivered attack after attack on Tobruk harbour which Rommel wished to use and did use for some time as his principal supply base. By the end of the quarter Tobruk had been bombed over eighty times and the enemy was driven to use Benghazi at times as an alternative base, in spite of its greater distance from the front, but that port, too, was well within the range of British, Dominion and American heavy bombers and ships and harbour installations suffered much damage. On the night of September 3-4 an Italian destroyer was torpedoed and was believed to have been sunk by the Fleet Air Arm, and another was bombed in the Central Mediterranean and left on fire on the night of September 7-8.

In the Eastern Mediterranean enemy-occupied ports in Greece and Crete were visited on several occasions by British and U.S. bombers. Thus the R.A.F. made a successful attack on shipping in Suda Bay on July 22. A large transport out of a convoy was sunk by U.S. B24 bombers early in August, and on August 11 U.S. heavy bombers attacked ships off Navarino and hit at least one Italian cruiser. A group of our light vessels made a brief raid on Rhodes harbour before dawn on August 13 and scored hits on batteries, harbour installations and shipping. During September Axis aerodromes near Candia and shipping in Suda Bay were bombed with good effect. Co-operation between the R.A.F. and the Army had gone far in the Libyan campaign. But that co-operation between the British and Allied Air Forces in the Mediterranean and the Navy was not above

criticism was suggested by the setting up, by Admiral Harwood's orders, of a new organization for its improvement.

There was little to report from the Western Mediterranean. Italian tales of successful attacks on British shipping at Gibraltar by torpedo craft E-boats were not confirmed and Italian and German aircraft appeared to have confined themselves to occasional reconnaissances of the Rock, save on the night of September 24-25 when a few Italian machines dropped a few bombs harmlessly into the sea and sheered away from the barrage. There were reports, usually from Spanish sources, of anti-submarine activity by British and American vessels in the neighbourhood of the Straits of Gibraltar, but these reports were neither confirmed nor denied by the Admiralty.

## 2 : BEFORE EL-ALAMEIN

On July 1 the armies respectively commanded by Field-Marshal Rommel and General Auchinleck joined battle east of Daba, in the region of el-Alamein, about eighty miles west of Alexandria. The odds seemed all in favour of the Axis forces. Their large captures at Tobruk and elsewhere of provisions and transport had eased the problem presented by the extension of their line of communications. They had been admirably led ; the Germans in particular had the most complete confidence in their cause, their chief, and their training ; the Italians, vastly cheered by their share in defeating the British at Gazala and Tobruk, were at "the top of their form" ; and both expected soon to be rewarded for their efforts and fatigues by the spoils and comforts of Alexandria and Cairo. On the British side the Eighth Army had lost a great amount of war material and between 50,000 and 60,000 men ; it should be said here that Lieutenant-General Gott, the Commander of the XIIIth Corps, retained the undiminished trust and affection of his soldiers and his staff. Its numerical

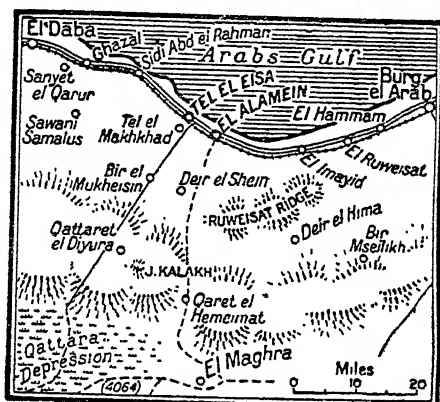
superiority in tanks had been proved delusive by the bitter experience of battle; only the General Grant type could be relied upon to give the Axis armour a fight and these machines were not equal to the best German tanks on this front for reasons which have been explained in the preceding volume of this chronicle.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the British troops retained their admirable and characteristic qualities of fighting all the more fiercely and stubbornly when defeat stared them in the face. They had been beaten but they had not been broken; the reinforcements which had reached Egypt just before or during the retreat might not be sufficiently trained in desert war to be immediately utilizable at the front, but their arrival made it possible to employ reserves at the front which would otherwise have been tied to the defence of strategic positions in the rear and to provide for the protection of Cairo and the Delta where the canals and branches of the Nile presented a greater obstacle to Axis armour than the desert approaches to Alexandria. Fresh war material was arriving in Egypt or was on its way. Last, but very far from least, the R.A.F., in spite of appreciable losses in the heavy fighting of the last month, had maintained its ascendancy over the *Luftwaffe* and the *Regia Aeronautica* and was about to be joined at the front by continually increasing United States Army Air Force contingents as well as by reinforcements from Great Britain.

The narrowness of the el-Alamein front was another factor favouring the defence. The line which we held was hardly more than forty miles in length from the sea to the impassable Qattara depression which guarded our left against any wide turning movement. The descent to the depression was steep and often precipitous. Parts of it were covered by boulders. In others were salt pans and pools of brine which expanded into marshes and quicksands during the season of the Nile flood (August-November). Small bodies of troops might cross it; its difficulties closed it to large forces with wheeled transport. The country intervening between the sea

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, pp. 102-3.

and the depression was the usual dusty, stony steppe of Marmarica, with sand-dunes near the coast and many extensive outcrops of limestone rock farther inland. Ruins of early Christian monasteries and a few Moslem shrines frequented by the Bedouin were scattered about this forty-mile-wide neck between the Qattara depression and the sea. They provided names for points which would otherwise have been marked by numbers on our military maps. Here and there were ridges rising a little above the steppe, and in some cases providing valuable



By courtesy of *The Times*

### THE ALAMEIN FRONT

observation posts. It was, on the whole, an advantage to the attacking army that they mostly ran more or less from east to west instead of at right angles to an advance against Alexandria.

The fighting on July 1 was fierce. The German armoured divisions made a temporary breach in our line, but it was repaired before the enemy could exploit it, and the attack, mainly pressed against our right along the railway, gained little ground. Next day Rommel attacked all along the line, inflicting and sustaining appreciable losses, while our light forces harassed his right and British and Imperial aircraft delivered blow after blow on his transport columns, his armoured units and



the landing grounds of his aircraft. On July 3 General Auchinleck passed to the offensive while the Allied air forces, "co-operating with the land forces on a scale unprecedented in the Middle East," hammered the enemy's concentrations and communications throughout the day and made most successful attacks on his dive-bombers and their fighter escorts whenever they tried to intervene. Twenty-four Axis aircraft were shot down during the day, sixteen Ju. 87s among them, and our bombers claimed the destruction of numerous hostile machines on the ground at Sidi Barrani and other airfields well to Rommel's rear. Several hundred prisoners and forty guns fell into our hands.

Next day the Eighth Army renewed its counter-attacks. Heavy artillery fire forced Axis armoured formations to abandon an important ridge south of el-Alamein which they had taken earlier in the battle, leaving a number of disabled tanks behind. The Allied air forces continued their attacks, shooting down nine Axis machines of which five were Me.109s. A hostile air-raid that night on Alexandria and the Canal zone cost the enemy five bombers. On July 5 we counter-attacked again, supported by our aircraft which accounted for six Axis machines. Next day, July 6, the battle died down save in the air, where our squadrons continued to bomb the enemy intensively, to attack his transport and to raid his landing grounds and airfields. During this and the next three days ground fighting was restricted to night raids and patrol encounters. The thrust at Alexandria had been parried, but it had been "a close thing" and in spite of the admirable dispositions of General Auchinleck and the splendid resistance of the British and Dominion forces it might have gone hard with us but for the brilliant series of counter-attacks by air which were planned and directed by Air Chief-Marshal Coningham. The effect on the morale of the enemy was marked. The Germans were still to fight fiercely and well, but they had lost some of their fire. The Italians did not recover the *élan* which their successes had given them, and the Duce, after crossing to Libya, visiting Tobruk and Sollum and waiting for

about ten days to enter Alexandria in triumph, departed a disappointed man.

The battle was not over yet. Before dawn on July 10 the 9th Australian Division attacked in the Tel el-Eisa area and gained nearly five miles of ground along the railway west of el-Alamein, taking a large number of prisoners. During the day the enemy pushed eastwards with armour and infantry, but he was held, and his air forces, although reinforced, were unable to give his attack decisive support and lost at least eight machines to the R.A.F. On July 12 we consolidated the captured positions, raided Mersa Matruh and other points on the Axis line of communications by air, and delivered a heavy bombing attack on Benghazi by day. During that day's air operations Beaufighters shot down three Ju.52 troop-carrying machines near the coast to which they had flown from Greece or Crete. For the next two days we beat off Axis attacks on the captured positions in great heat. The Allied air squadrons attacked Daba landing ground in strength and destroyed several tanks in a column coming from the west to reinforce Rommel. Naval light craft raided Mersa Matruh.

On the night of July 14-15 the Germans counter-attacked and after hard fighting succeeded in recapturing part of the Tel el-Eisa position. An Australian unit was surrounded but cut its way through the enemy. We still held the higher ground, and in the centre we attacked and carried the western end of a disputed ridge south of el-Alamein. But the enemy had received reinforcements, notably of aircraft, and on the morning of July 15 his Stukas delivered heavy attacks on our positions. The next three days saw much heavy fighting by land, in the air and at sea. There our light craft made several attacks on Mersa Matruh where the enemy was landing munitions, vehicles and stores by power lighters which he sought to protect with his strengthened air force. We lost a little more ground, but our main positions held, and on July 19 it was officially announced that we had taken 4,000 prisoners, mostly Italians, since July 14.

Then came a final spasm. After heavy air attacks on

Fuka airfield and on the power lighters plying between Tobruk and Mersa Matruh (July 20) and naval raids on Matruh harbour, General Auchinleck attacked on the night of July 21. Throughout July 22 there was fierce fighting chiefly in the Tel el-Eisa area and on the el-Makhkhad and Mteiriya ridges in which Indian, South African and New Zealand units were engaged and a Rajput regiment was specially mentioned for its prowess. The Navy continued its useful diversions at Mersa Matruh, and on July 23, although we had been forced back a short distance on the Ruweisat ridge, we had made gains and consolidated them at the other points of attack. After a lull of three days we made a limited offensive in the northern sector of the front, and fighting lasted until July 28. This time we made no important gains owing to the rocky nature of the ground which prevented our troops from consolidating the positions captured and made the enemy's artillery the more effective. So the first battle of el-Alamein ended in the repulse, though not in the decisive defeat of Rommel on July 28. During the last days enemy aircraft raided the Canal zone, where at least two bombers were destroyed by our night-fighters and forty civilian casualties were recorded. Bombers also raided the neighbourhood of Cairo, but did no important damage.

NOTE.—A statement issued on July 20 enumerated the British, Indian and Free French units engaged till then in the Alamein operations. These were : *British*—the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 8th, 42nd and 44th Royal Tank Regiments, the Queen's Bays, King's Dragoon Guards, 1st Royal Dragoons, 8th and 10th Hussars, 9th and 12th Lancers, City of London Yeomanry, Royal Gloucester Hussars, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Durham Light Infantry, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, the Green Howards, K.R.R.C., Rifle Brigade, Worcester, Cheshire and E. Yorks Regiments ; 3rd and 4th Regiments R.H.A. and the H.A.C. (11th Regiment R.H.A.) ; R.A. including A.A. regiments and R.E. *Indian*—Skinner's Horse, Frontier Force Rifles, Baluchi and Punjabi Regiments. *Free (Fighting) French*—2/13 and 3/13 Battalions Foreign Legion, Bataillons de Pacifique and 1st and 2nd Infanterie de la Marine.

For more than a month the front was relatively quiet. Rommel employed the interval in strengthening his army in men and machines. His losses in both had been heavy, but new tanks, armoured cars and lorries arrived

fairly regularly, some by road from Benghazi or Tobruk where they had been brought by transports from Italy, and some by the power-driven lighters which could take medium and large tanks on board as well as lorries, and had a capacity of about 250 tons. Protected by aircraft or E-boats, these useful vessels followed the coast from Tobruk to Mersa Matruh and though about twenty had been destroyed by the R.A.F. before mid-August, enough remained to be of great service to Rommel.

While he was building up his army for a new offensive, the Eighth Army had received important reinforcements. It had also received a most heartening and tonic visit from no less a leader than the Prime Minister himself. Arriving in Egypt on August 3 on his way to Moscow, he brought with him Sir Alan Brooke, C.I.G.S., and other important officers. One of his first visits was to King Farouk, who, it was recorded, delighted him by presenting him with a cigar a foot long, the largest that Mr. Churchill had ever smoked. He also visited the Egyptian Prime Minister, Nahas Pasha, and held a series of important conferences with General Auchinleck, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, who commanded the combined British and Allied Air Forces in the Middle East; Sir Miles Lampson, our Ambassador in Egypt; Mr. Casey and other important personages. He also met General Sir Henry Wilson, Commander of the Ninth Army, with whom and with Generals de Gaulle and Catroux he discussed the affairs of Syria and of the Ninth Army. An old friend and wise counsellor also met him in Egypt. This was General Smuts, whom the Prime Minister had not seen since the outbreak of war and with whom he had several long talks. That the British leader's discussions with the military chiefs covered a wide range was indicated by his meetings with Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief in India, and Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, Premier of the Punjab.

Mr. Churchill left Cairo for Teheran and Moscow on August 11. His visit to Moscow has already been described (Chapter I, Section 2). It should also be

recorded that he passed through Teheran on his way to see M. Stalin, and that he spent a day there on his return from Russia and lunched with the young Shah. The affairs of Persia were more satisfactory from the political than from the economic standpoint. On the 3rd M. Ali Suheyli, the Prime Minister, resigned office. He had encountered opposition to his attempts to prevent the hoarding of foodstuffs and other abuses, and was not considered by his critics in the Mejlis (Parliament) to have dealt sufficiently drastically with the hoarders. His place was taken by the veteran Qavam es-Sultaneh, who had shown himself an able provincial Governor-General and an energetic and patriotic Minister.

Mr. Churchill returned to Egypt on August 17. He had already visited many units at the front. He visited more on his second visit, among them his old regiment, the 4th Hussars. He spent a night with General Montgomery, who now commanded the Eighth Army, in his motor-caravan headquarters, and had important conversations with General Alexander, successor to General Auchinleck, General Anders, commanding the Polish forces in Russia and Persia, with whom he discussed the problem of evacuating the remaining Polish troops from Russia and building up a strong Polish Army in the Middle East ;<sup>1</sup> Lord Gort, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta ; General Auchinleck and M. Canellopoulos, Deputy Prime Minister of Greece. He paid much attention to the Tenth Army which is based on Iraq and was to be dissociated from the Egyptian Command. He saw in turn its Commander, General Quinan, Air Vice-Marshal de Crespigny, Commanding the R.A.F. in that area, and Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, our Ambassador in Baghdad. Another visitor was Prince Mohamed Ali of Egypt, who had been Regent during King Farouk's minority. On August 22 he departed for London, leaving the Army vastly heartened and cheered by his visit, his confidence and his knowledge of military affairs. He had told its officers on more than one occasion that the Army in Egypt was destined to take part in great

<sup>1</sup> He had already seen him in Moscow.

and decisive events, that the Middle East was a vital theatre of war and that the British and American Governments would do all in their power to keep the armies there reinforced and supplied.

Important changes in the commands of these armies were announced shortly before his return to London. On the night of August 18 the War Office made the following appointments known: General the Hon. Sir H. R. L. Alexander became Commander-in-Chief, Middle East in succession to General Sir C. J. Auchinleck; Lieutenant-General B. L. Montgomery to be Commander, Eighth Army, *vice* Lieutenant-General Ritchie, and Major-General H. Lumsden to command the XXXth Army Corps in succession to Lieutenant-General W. H. Gott. The tragic death of the last-named officer, killed when the aeroplane that was taking him on a brief leave to Cairo was shot down, was officially notified on August 12. A leader of high ability and experience, he was deeply regretted by all who had served under him.

The new Commander-in-Chief was particularly well-known for his outstanding services under great difficulties in the evacuation of Dunkirk and in Burma and for his share in the introduction of a new system of infantry training and battle drill.<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-General Montgomery came from the South-Eastern Command with the reputation of a hard-fighting and single-minded soldier. Major-General Lumsden had commanded an armoured division in Libya with success. On the day after these appointments were announced the War Office stated that the King had approved the appointment of Major-General R. L. McCreery to be Chief of the General Staff, Middle East, in succession to Lieutenant-General T. W. Corbett, who had commanded an armoured division at home and had been sent to the Middle East as technical adviser on the use of armoured forces. These changes were generally approved. General Auchinleck's handling of the Eighth Army at el-Alamein had unquestionably been excellent, but in the circumstances there was much to be said for a general change in the Middle

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Ninth Quarter*, p. 18.

Eastern High Command, and General Smuts, commenting on his Cairo meeting with Mr. Churchill at Johannesburg on August 23, observed that while General Auchinleck was "one of the ablest commanders" he had ever met, that did not mean that he was "the best man to win that victory in North Africa."

Another important military change was announced on August 22. It had been decided to establish a new independent Army Command in Persia and Iraq. General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, who had commanded the British forces in Greece and Syria and had subsequently been in command of the Ninth Army, was appointed to its command. The name of his successor to the command of the Ninth Army was not announced during the quarter. The change was ascribed in some quarters to the German threat to the Caucasus. In any case the Tenth Army in Iraq had been included in the Middle Eastern Command and linked for purposes of supply with the Ninth Army which was partly dependent on the Basra-Baghdad railway for its supplies. Now that the Palestine railways had been linked with the Syrian system by the completion of the Haifa-Beirut railway, this reason for the linking of the Ninth and Tenth Armies no longer existed. Incidentally, the Tenth Army had been provided with important base depots on the Persian Gulf, and road and railway communications through Persia had been greatly improved.

It was not surprising that these changes and the public knowledge that both the Axis and the Allied forces in Egypt were being heavily reinforced strengthened the general conviction that Mr. Churchill's visit to the Middle East would have no less important consequences than his journey to Russia. It may be added that on August 19 General Auchinleck, in a farewell message to the Eighth Army, which he thanked "for the magnificent way in which you have responded to the heavy calls I have made on you," paid a high tribute to the air forces for their aid, without which "the story would have been very different." Powerful American and British air reinforcements continued to arrive in the Middle East ;

the next clash would be marked by still heavier air battles. Awaiting it the Eighth Army was in good heart and rightly. In his message, General Auchinleck reminded its officers and men that in spite of its heavy losses and the disorganization caused by its "rapid withdrawal from the frontier," it had taken 10,000 prisoners during the battles at el-Alamein and had destroyed or captured many of the enemy's tanks, guns and vehicles.

During the last days of August there were signs that Rommel was preparing an offensive, and on the night of August 30-31, after a day marked by much air activity wherein the R.A.F. shot down two troop-carriers, he attacked the left of the Allied line. For the next two days there was heavy fighting, particularly between the Ruweisat and Hemeimat ridges. On September 2 hostile pressure was slackening and our artillery and aircraft were continuing and indeed increasing their heavy bombardments of the Axis forces. On September 3 Cairo reported that Rommel's forces had fallen back slightly westwards. Next day their further withdrawal was confirmed, and on September 5 the German official wireless announced the successful conclusion of a reconnaissance in force.

What had happened? During the next days the story of Rommel's second repulse on the Alamein front was told, mainly by the war correspondents with the Eighth Army. Rommel had begun by driving in our advanced units, especially on our left, after which his very competent engineers cleared a way for his armour through our minefields covering our left flank near the Hemeimat ridge. The German and Italian armoured divisions then rounded our left flank, and by September 1 their vanguards were within fifteen miles of the coast road. Here, however, the Axis columns encountered strongly fortified positions, defended by a wealth of artillery; probing attacks on our centre found no weak spot; and fierce and constant air attacks by British, Dominion and American squadrons inflicted heavy losses on the enemy's transport columns which were further harassed by our light armoured units. On September 2 our counter-



attack began and our artillery inflicted heavy punishment on the Axis armour concentrated on our left centre and left. In the centre a clumsy ruse failed. Two German officers with white flags appeared before our positions and demanded their surrender on the ground that their tanks had broken through and were converging on our centre which should hoist the white flag to avoid unnecessary slaughter. The demand was refused with much loud laughter, and next day Rommel began slowly to draw his armour back from its exposed positions. On the night of September 3-4 he tried a diversionary attack on our centre which was repulsed by British troops and the 4th Indian Division. New Zealand troops retorted with a counter-stroke which gained its objectives and then repelled three Italo-German attempts to recover the lost ground. After this failure the enemy fell back slowly and by September 7 the front was much where it had been on August 30, save in the Munassib area between the Ruweisat and Hemeimat ridges, where the enemy had driven a salient into our position.

If Rommel's advance was really only a reconnaissance in force it had been highly expensive. He was believed to have lost nearly 120 tanks; his aircraft which he had employed, especially on September 2 and 3<sup>1</sup>, in mass attacks on our positions had been diminished by at least 55 machines. His casualties in officers and men had been heavy, and they included General von Bismarck, the commander of the 21st Panzer Division. It had been an encouraging success for the Eighth Army. Our losses had been relatively light; our anti-tank artillery had done excellently; American tank detachments and Army Air Force squadrons had come through the ordeal of their first major battle with flying colours; our own Air Force had once again shown its superiority to Germans and Italians; above all our staff work had been of the highest quality.

<sup>1</sup> When four mass attacks on which nearly 100 aircraft, half of them fighters, were engaged, were delivered against our positions. British, South African and American squadrons set up new records in the number of sorties during the critical five days.

The repulse of Rommel's thrust was soon followed by British attacks on his communications. On the night of September 13-14 British and American bombers carried out a long raid on Tobruk, while light naval craft and a small landing force attacked the port. The operation was gallantly conducted, but unforeseen accidents, e.g. the parting of a tow-rope, delayed our landing, and although the troops landed inflicted much damage, "the withdrawal," in the words of the official *communiqué*, "was not carried out without losses, which, in view of the strength of the defence, were to be expected." The Italians claimed 576 prisoners, including men from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, the 11th Battalion Royal Marines and the Royal Navy. They also claimed to have sunk an anti-aircraft cruiser, and the Admiralty admitted the loss of the destroyers *Sikh* (Captain St. J. Micklethwait) and *Zulu* (Commander R. T. White). The *Sikh* was disabled by gunfire; an attempt to tow her away failed. Her commander then ordered the *Zulu* to make no further attempt at rescue and the *Zulu* herself, after beating off several bombing attacks, was finally hit and sank. Most of her complement were rescued.

During the raid smaller detachments attacked Benghazi and the Barce aerodrome. They were composed of light armoured vehicles and lorry-borne infantry. Whether they had come from Kufra, or had threaded their way through the enemy's posts and bases in Cyrenaica after passing round his flank in Egypt, over 400 miles from Benghazi, they completely surprised the Italians, who first announced that they had been attacked by paratroops. About thirty Axis aircraft were destroyed or damaged at Barce and much transport was wrecked there and at Benghazi. With daylight these groups were detected and pursued by armoured cars and bombed by aircraft, but most got clear away. Two nights later a larger force attacked Jalo Oasis, some 500 miles from the Egyptian front, which the Italians had lost in the previous November<sup>1</sup> and had subsequently reoccupied. On the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Ninth Quarter*, p. 87.

night of September 15-16 a British force broke in from the desert, penned the garrison in the fort for four or five days and methodically destroyed stores and dumps which had been accumulated, perhaps for an attack on Kufra. Well supplied with A.A. guns, the raiders beat off hostile aircraft and retired in good order on the approach of Axis mechanized reinforcements. The Italians said that the attacking force came from Kufra, where the Fighting French had established themselves in the winter of 1940-41<sup>1</sup> and we had recently sent reinforcements. German aircraft bombed the oasis a few days later and claimed to have hit transport aeroplanes and Blenheims grounded in the oasis. It certainly appeared that the attack on Jalo came from Kufra unless, indeed, the column had by-passed Siwa (where the Italians had a strong garrison) and Jarabub Oasis without being observed which, while possible, seemed scarcely probable.

In Egypt the Axis threat was met confidently and courageously by Nahas Pasha's Government. They ordered certain politicians to reside under police observation in their country estates. They dismissed a few Egyptian Army officers who showed signs of lukewarmness or panic and they arrested certain Italians who failed to keep their enthusiasm within bounds. Some Italian residents in Alexandria, on hearing that their fellow-countrymen were nearing Alexandria, sent a deputation provided with fruit and refreshing drinks to meet them, but the bearers of these refreshments encountered Australian patrols who sent them back to Alexandria after gleefully consuming fruit and beverages. Mention may be made here of the excellent behaviour of the large Greek colony in Egypt who set an admirable example of calm and confidence, as did the British residents. Palestine and the Sudan remained quiet, and the Syrian Moslems, although much worked on by Axis propaganda and often disaffected, showed their prudence by keeping quiet.

In Ethiopia the Emperor Haile Selassie was successful in maintaining order and set an example of frugality in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Sixth Quarter*, p. 59.

the management of his Civil List. In August he bade farewell to the British troops, who were withdrawn from the country in accordance with the terms of the Treaty, with the exception of a few detachments retained in specified areas for the protection of the Addis Ababa-Jibuti Railway. The ceremony included a banquet to 700 officers and men of the King's African Rifles. The Rases were loyal, and when Galla tribesmen east of Dessie gave trouble owing to Italian intrigues, Ras Seyyum of Tigré called out the militia and forced them to submit. At the end of August a new Ethiopian Minister to the Court of St. James arrived in London in the person of Professor Ayalla Gabré.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FAR EASTERN WAR

#### I : BURMA AND MADAGASCAR

##### (A.) BURMA

With the coming of the monsoon rains fighting died down on the borders of Yunnan and the Japanese made no serious attempt to penetrate the belt of forest, marsh and mountain that separated Burma from India. Military activity was confined to the air save at a few points in the Naga Hills where Naga tribesmen, supported by small British and Indian detachments, employed such primitive weapons as arrows, tiger-traps, dead-falls and throwing spears against venturesome Japanese patrols that attempted to make their way into Indian territory. In dense jungle where five yards was often the limit of visibility, weapons that killed silently had their advantages. Several hostile patrols were wiped out by the Nagas whose adventurous instincts, lately curbed by the Indian Government's objection to the time-honoured custom of head-hunting, were revived by the approach of the war to their borders.

In the air the R.A.F. and U.S. bomber squadrons delivered a series of attacks on Japanese communications, airfields and supply dumps in Burma during July and August. The railways were subjected to frequent bombing; river steamers were attacked; the airfield at Myitkyina from which Japanese fighters might have intercepted the American Ferry Command's China-bound aircraft was made unserviceable through the greater part of these months by U.S. bombers. Akyab, an advanced position from which the enemy might attack India by sea and air, was the special target of the R.A.F. We sustained no loss in the majority of these attacks until September 9 when heavier A.A. fire and fighter

opposition were encountered and four bombers did not return. On this occasion a Japanese cargo ship was hit and went down in shallow water.

The Japanese had professed their intention of "liberating" Burma from British rule, but it soon became clear that their methods were too primitive to win any reputable Burman support. On August 1 General Iida, their Commander-in-Chief in Burma, set up a joint Japanese-Burman administration under Dr. Ba Maw, the first Prime Minister of Burma under the 1937 constitution who had been imprisoned for treasonable behaviour in 1940, but had escaped during the Japanese invasion. The Japanese General reserved the portfolios of Defence and Finance for Japanese, abolished Parliament and the freedom of the Press and announced that the new Government must work in collaboration with the Japanese Army and must eschew any policy contrary to that of the Japanese military administration. The General concluded his proclamation by stating that it fulfilled General Tojo's wish to grant Burma independence, and added :

"The Japanese Army wishes the Indians to achieve their long-cherished independence just as much as it wishes the Burmese to secure theirs.' The correspondent of *The Times* at Delhi observed in this connexion : 'Before the Japanese conquest, Burma had a government chosen from representatives elected to Parliament by a free vote of all communities and districts on a wide suffrage. The Budget was controlled by the Government and finance matters were subject to discussion by elected members of the House of Representatives. Burma is exchanging this for an administrative body not wholly Burmese, all of whose actions are subject to acceptance or rejection by the Japanese Commander-in-Chief.'"

Before long Burmans whose attitude during the invasion had been, to say the least, obstructive were escaping into India at great personal risk to place themselves at the disposal of the British military authorities. One of the best-known Burman politicians who had stayed with his people during the invasion also escaped to tell the British that the Burmans were furious with the Japanese for their treatment of Parliament and their cynical reversal of their promises, and that the behaviour of Japanese soldiers towards Burman women had aroused general anger and disgust.

Mention is best made here of a remarkable feat achieved by the Chinese troops of the Vth Army who were cut off by the Japanese capture of Mandalay and Bhamo and could not retire into Yunnan.<sup>1</sup> Led by Major-General Liao Tzi-ping they made their way westwards through the jungles after destroying their wheeled transport. As they retreated the fury of the monsoon burst upon them. The rains turned brooks into rivers, mountain passes into cataracts and swept away improvised bridges. It was usually impossible to light fires to dry uniforms or cook food ; the clothes rotted off the soldiers' backs ; leeches and mosquitoes covered them with septic sores which sometimes killed men ; they had no nurses and the doctors had no medicines. Fully a thousand men of this force, roughly, of brigade strength, died of exhaustion, starvation and malaria on this march. Of nine young women who accompanied them two hanged themselves when they could go no further and only three survived. Yet the spirit of these good soldiers was such that they saved many of their mules, their Bren guns and their light mortars. The country into which they had plunged was largely unknown ; after a while habitation ceased, provisions ran out and they lived on cooked banana roots. In August they were sighted by patrolling pilots of the R.A.F., who dropped provisions for them, and struggled exhausted but undaunted over the border of north-eastern Assam in the middle of the month. There they were rested, re-armed with American weapons, and by the end of September they were developing into a most promising striking force under American tuition.

#### (B.) MADAGASCAR

On September 10 the War Office announced the resumption of operations in Madagascar that morning, "in accordance with the decision of his Majesty's

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, Chapter V, Section 1A.

Government," and the announcement was followed by a declaration by the British Government which stated :

"After the occupation of Diego Suarez his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had hoped that the Governor-General of Madagascar would allow the British Command to take such steps as they considered necessary in order to deny to the Axis Powers bases and facilities elsewhere in the island. The attitude of the Vichy Government, whose instructions the Governor-General follows, made it clear, however, that their essential requirements could not be achieved by peaceful means. They have therefore been reluctantly compelled to undertake further military operations in the island.

"Once a friendly administration has been established in the island, willing to enter into full collaboration with the United Nations, and thus contribute to the liberation of France, his Majesty's Government will extend to Madagascar all the economic and financial benefits accorded to other French territories which have joined the United Nations. These will include the early reopening of trade with the United Nations and the guarantee by his Majesty's Government of the payment of salaries and pensions to all civilians and military employees in Madagascar who continue to serve under the new Administration.

"His Majesty's Government have no territorial designs on Madagascar. Madagascar remains French."

On the same day the State Department announced that Great Britain found it absolutely necessary to engage in further operations in Madagascar and that these would have the full approval of the United States. The necessity could not have been disputed by anyone acquainted with the facts. Axis agents had remained in the island ; Japanese aircraft had flown without hindrance over central and southern Madagascar ; Japanese submarines had appeared in the Mozambique Channel and had sunk several British and Allied merchantmen. The French authorities in the island made no concession. Nor were they impressed by the bloodless occupation by a force of Royal Marines, British Commando troops and King's African Rifles of Mayotte island, one of the French Comoro group, on July 2. Mayotte possessed a good harbour and an airfield, and lay in the middle of the wide northern portion of the Mozambique Channel, but its occupation could not prevent the Japanese submarines from using French ports and territorial waters along the west coast of Madagascar, and there was every indication that the Vichy French would not attempt to prevent them.



Under the command of General Sir William Platt, the victor at Kéren and since then Commander-in-Chief in East Africa, the British landed at three points. These were Nossi Bé island off the north-west coast, the port of Majunga about 180 miles further south, and Morondava, also on the west coast, about 250 miles by air from Majunga. The northernmost force took Nossi Bé against slight opposition, while a column marched southwards from Diego Suarez towards Ambanja. The central force encountered some resistance at Majunga, but the French coastal batteries were silent, no French aircraft disputed the skies with the Fleet Air Arm, and the garrison, after having shown for three hours that they could fight, ceased fire in answer to a summons and surrendered. Casualties on both sides were light and the civil population who had expected the occupation of the port for months past were relieved that it was so quickly effected. Most of the officials expressed their readiness to serve under the British. The force that landed at Morondava encountered no resistance.

There was no delay on the coast. The Majunga and Morondava columns pressed on rapidly. The Majunga column reached the great suspension bridge over the Betsiboka River on September 12. The Vichy French had cut the cables and lowered the middle span into the river, but the small force covering the bridge was driven off with some casualties and the loss of 47 prisoners. We had but four wounded. Our troops soon crossed the river and continued their march towards Antananarivo, the capital. The Morondava force made good progress, while in the north we took Ambanja after a skirmish and occupied the port of Vohemar on the north-eastern coast.

During the next two days difficulties of terrain and French demolitions slowed down the advance, but on the afternoon of September 14 the Majunga column was half-way to the capital and another force had landed near Maromandia, south of Ambanja.

The French Government had protested vigorously against the "unnameable" action of the British in safeguarding their own position in the western Indian

Ocean and the German Press had professed horror at this violation of international law ! But protests had no effect, and on September 16 M. Annet, the Governor-General, sent plenipotentiaries to ask for an armistice and open negotiations. These reached General Platt's headquarters, but rejected his terms. Operations continued. On September 17 a British squadron escorting several transports appeared off Tamatave on the eastern coast of Madagascar and sent an envoy ashore to induce the garrison to surrender. He "was received with fire," but "after a few shells had been directed at the defences by his Majesty's ships" the town surrendered. Meanwhile, the Maromandia column pressed southward and the Majunga force fought a successful action with French troops south of Andriba. M. Annet, in a message to M. Brevi, the Secretary for the Colonies, stated that British terms had been inadmissible on all points and that the garrison would resist to the end. He added :

"As a symbol of the feelings of the whole people and as a gesture of non-acceptance of the armistice terms, I, in full accord with the Government of the Marshal propose to signify our will to resist by my absence from the capital if the adversary reaches it. But," he continued, "I have asked all officials and employees of the State to remain at their posts for the honour of the France of Marshal Pétain. . . ."

After this somewhat comic announcement M. Annet left the capital for the south of the island. The British force from Tamatave occupied the rail and road junction at Brickaville ; the north-western advance reached and took Ankazobe after a short engagement on September 19, while rain and French demolitions failed to halt, although they delayed our advances from the west and north-west towards the capital. As they neared it resistance stiffened, and on September 21 the column approaching from Majunga encountered French troops in positions supported by artillery some fifteen miles north of Antananarivo. On the afternoon of September 22 the capture of the village of Mahitsy cleared the way for the final advance. The Vichy forces had no chance for they were also threatened by the Tamatave column from Brickaville and with the control of the whole of the

main road from Diego Suarez to Majunga assured by the meeting of two British columns at Antsohihy they were less able to interfere with the communications of the invaders. Resistance ceased, and on the evening of September 23 a voice interrupted a musical programme given by the Antananarivo wireless station with the words: "A British officer speaking. British troops entered Antananarivo at 5 p.m. to-day. All is quiet. That is all." Next day the War Office issued the following announcement:

"Supported by South African armoured cars and British artillery, East African troops entered Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, on Wednesday afternoon. Our troops were received with cheering by the whole population and the town is quiet and peaceful. Before our entry the last French garrisons to the west of the city surrendered unconditionally. Antalaha, on the north-east coast, was also occupied early on Wednesday morning."

A proclamation made by General Platt made it clear that the British action had only been taken to deprive the Axis of facilities in Madagascar and that French sovereignty remained unimpaired. French officials were requested to continue in office which all or almost all agreed to do. In the course of a statement issued on September 25 the Foreign Office, after confirming General Platt's announcement, said that in order to ensure law and order and to provide for the administration pending the establishment of a friendly regime, the British Commander had declared the island to be temporarily subject to military jurisdiction. It was hoped that the local authorities would co-operate in carrying on the administration so that there might be no interference with the normal life of the island. On the following day Paris Radio stated that M. Annet, the Vichy Governor-General, had shifted his headquarters to Fort Dauphin on the east coast, whence resistance would be carried on. It was known that he had few troops and that unless he obtained Axis assistance he could do little. A British column advanced towards Antsirabe, the railhead, after a successful skirmish at Behenjy, south of the capital, and another landed without opposition at the south-western port of Tuléar on September 29. Contact between the

troops at the capital and the Tamatave column had already been made and it did not appear that M. Annet could give effect to his orders from Vichy to resist to the last.

Meanwhile, all the troops who could be spared set to work on the repair of the bridges and culverts that had been destroyed by the Governor-General's orders. By a narrow margin they had won their race against the autumn rains and the malaria which these threatened to bring. They had been excellently led, and though they had only encountered what Mr. Churchill in his statement to Parliament on September 29 called a "mainly symbolic" resistance, they had shown great spirit and energy in overcoming great natural and climatic obstacles in this brief and successful campaign.

## 2 : CHINA, RUSSIA, JAPAN

On July 7, the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of war—incidentally still undeclared by Japan—was observed all over unoccupied China. Messages of encouragement and congratulation reached General Chiang Kai-shek from the leaders of the Allied nations<sup>1</sup> and those from President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill were especially appreciated at Chungking. The Chinese leader and the Chinese people had indeed accomplished a remarkable feat in maintaining their resistance and cohesion against an enemy infinitely better armed, highly trained, admirably organized and most formidable in the field. Their achievement appeared all the greater when their difficulties and handicaps were impartially studied. The Chinese were traditionally the least militaristic of the great nations; their national spirit was of recent growth; their officers had largely been trained in the bad school of civil wars too often inspired by personal ambition rather than by political convictions. The feud between the

<sup>1</sup> Save Russia, which was neutral. The Russian Press, however, was admirably friendly.

Communist Party of China and the Kuomintang Party had tended to revive from time to time, owing to the inability of the Communists and perhaps of some of the Kuomintang to subordinate party interests to the common weal ; the British and Americans from whom much had been hoped had suffered grievous reverses at Japanese hands. It could not indeed be maintained that Chinese military leadership had been always competent.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Chinese commanders had made deplorable mistakes ; others seemed to lack the offensive spirit to an extent that could not be altogether excused by inferiority of armament. There were sectors on the Chinese front where skirmishes were rare and guerilla activities behind the Japanese lines were discouraged by Chinese commanders. In Russia the chief object of virtually every Russian soldier at the front was to kill all Germans who exposed themselves ; in these Chinese sectors the Chinese troops left the Japanese alone unless the invaders threatened some really important point and so forced them to defend themselves. The startling exaggerations of the Chinese military spokesmen at Chungking, who were continually asserting that Japanese armies were being "surrounded"<sup>2</sup> and allowing the Press to publish astronomical figures of the enemy's losses, produced a scepticism in other Allied countries that was natural but most undesirable in the general interest of the United Nations.

Yet in spite of these local weaknesses, in spite of the loss of arsenals and railways, of ports and markets, in spite of the Japanese blockade and the loss of the Burma Road, the Chinese continued to resist and to tie up considerable Japanese forces in the interior. To judge from the lists of local administrations set up by the Japanese

<sup>1</sup> The lamentable failure of the Chinese Army on the Salween-Shan front (cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, Chapter V, page 106) is a case in point ; likewise the carelessness which prevented Chinese commanders from preparing to receive the American bombers which had raided Japan and made for Chinese airfields, with the result that several crashed.

<sup>2</sup> When Lord Roberts marched on Pretoria his army was "surrounded" in the sense that parties of Boers lurked in its rear and on its flanks but they did not endanger it. This, one suspects, often happened in China where the "surrounded" Japanese divisions always got away.

in occupied areas and from the claims of Wang Ching-wei's puppet Government and controlled Press, China had more quislings than any other victim of Axis aggression. Yet even the Japanese knew right well that the "Nanking Government" would not survive their own departure for a week, and that a high proportion of its employees and militiamen were in close touch with Chiang Kai-shek's troops and officials on the other side of the fluctuating front and were ready to join the patriotic forces on the first favourable opportunity. If the Japanese had ever had a chance to obtain the acquiescence of the Chinese masses in their presence and control they had thrown it away. Their general use of the bomber aeroplane for purposes of repression or terrorization and their abominable treatment of women had earned them the furious hate of townsmen and peasants alike. Their frequent bombardments of Chungking had failed utterly to shake the resolution of the Government, and when it became clear that, although the Burma Road had been cut, American aerial aid was reaching the Chinese armies, the moral of both troops and people on the fighting front improved out of all proportion to the strength of the units which flew from India.

At the end of the previous quarter American aircraft were engaged against the Japanese in southern and central China and their numbers increased slowly but surely during the period under review. On July 4 the famous American Volunteer Group, under the command of Brigadier-General Chenault, was formally inducted into the United States Army Air Force in China. Its pilots had certainly destroyed 284 Japanese aircraft during six months' fighting in Burma, Indo-China and China. The "Flying Tigers," as the Chinese called them, had never numbered more than 250 all told. They had lost 23 pilots, they had endured great hardships, but almost all volunteered to continue their service. Their increasing activity began to tell in July when the Japanese offensive in Chekiang and Kiangsi lost its initial momentum. On July 9 the Chinese recaptured or reoccupied Nancheng, and although on July 10 the Japanese landed on the

Chekiang coast near Wenchow and also took Futou Island at the mouth of the Min River, near the important naval station of Foochow, they were expelled from the island by a night attack and they lost Wenchow on August 15 after holding it for more than a month.

By the end of July the Chinese had regained several towns in Chekiang and Kiangsi Provinces, and during August they reoccupied many more places which they had lost in May and June. Among these were the airfields of Yushan and Chuhsien, the latter one of the largest in the Far East, and Lishui, from all of which Japan could be reached by long-range bombers. Before evacuating Chuhsien the enemy wrecked everything that could be of use to the Chinese and they also pulled up the railway between it and Kinhwa. At the end of the month the Japanese had to evacuate Lanki, twelve miles north-west of Kinhwa, and they were engaged with Chinese troops near Nanchang, south of the Poyang Lake in Kiangsi, the chief centre of the invaders' strength in that important province.

At a Press Conference on August 25 Dr. Wang Shih-N'ieh, spokesman for the Ministry of Information, said that these advances showed that the spirit of the Chinese Army was as high as ever. He added that :

"The timely participation of the United States Army Air Force in the campaign, and particularly in our counter-offensive against Linchwan has helped to sustain that spirit." "The Japanese," he explained, "intended to achieve two objects ; first to seize the airfields from which the allies could bomb Japan and, second, to secure control of the entire Chekiang-Kiangsi railway. As, however, the enemy, in spite of his overwhelmingly superior forces . . . never succeeded in inflicting serious losses on our main forces, he never had an opportunity to consolidate the many strategic points that he captured."

The American squadrons had certainly done excellent work. Among their targets during July and August were the water-front at Hankow (July 2 and 16), Nanchang aerodrome on July 3, where three aeroplanes attempting to take off and one attempting to intercept the raiders were destroyed for the loss of one fighter, the White Cloud aerodrome near Canton on July 18,

shipping near Kiukiang on the Yangtze, and wharves and shipping at Hankow for the third time on August 5. The Japanese from Canton raided the American base at Hengyang, about 200 miles north-north-west of Canton, on July 30-31. They attacked in relays for many hours, using Zero fighters to escort and protect their bombers, but they lost seventeen machines for certain against the Americans' loss of four. General Stilwell further reported



By courtesy of *The Times*

#### CHEKIANG AND KIANGSI

that on the night of July 30-31, in the first night operations against the Japanese in China, four out of nine Japanese bombers were shot down by American night fighter machines, and that the Japanese had used forty-three bombers and fifty-six improved Zero fighters in these operations, the latter for the first time in China where the weakness of the Chinese in the air had thus far enabled the enemy to employ older types. The failure of the attack to damage the principal allied air base in south-central China was demonstrated during the next few days. On August 3 American bombers with fighter



escort shot up Japanese headquarters at Linchuan in Kiangsi and raided the Fu River waterfront. Next day the Americans beat off an attack on Hengyang destroying three aeroplanes and bombed the waterfront at Hankow, and on August 6 they surprised the Japanese airfield at Tienho near Canton, claimed the destruction of ten machines on the ground and came back without loss.

A still more impressive raid followed. On August 9 American fighters and bombers attacked Haiphong, the important seaport in northern Indo-China, set a large transport on fire and bombed the docks.

During August there were further attacks on Hankow (August 10), Nanchang aerodrome (August 11), Yochow in Hunan (August 11), and minor objectives in northern Indo-China, and on September 2 a number of boats carrying Japanese troops were sunk on the Poyang Lake, seven steamers were destroyed on the Yangtze and railway transport and headquarters were shot up at and near Nanchang.

Late in September General Stilwell seems to have shifted his aerial attentions to the Japanese troops in Yunnan on the Burma road who had previously been the targets of American squadrons based on India.

All these operations were, it is true, on a small scale by European standards. But they greatly cheered the Chinese troops and civilians and they probably contributed to some extent to the withdrawal of the strong Japanese forces which had opened their offensive along the line of the Shanghai-Kiukiang railway in May.<sup>1</sup> The failure of the Japanese to press this much-trumpeted offensive home, their similar failure to advance for any distance towards Hengyang from Canton and the general inactivity of their troops in northern China except in the Suiyuan Province, where they made some advances, aroused much comment in China and abroad. It was certainly strange that the Japanese, after advertising an offensive which was to remove all danger of air attack on their cities from bases in Chekiang, should have abandoned these prizes after capturing them and should also

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eleventh Quarter*, Chapter V, Section 2.

have abandoned their attempt to control the whole of the strategically important Shanghai-Kiukiang railway. In China it was believed that the Japanese contemplated an early attack on Russia which some prophets said was to coincide with the fall of Stalingrad. It was known that the Japanese troops in Manchukuo had been greatly strengthened; estimates of a total force of 1,000,000 men and 1,000 aeroplanes reached Britain and the U.S.A. from Chungking, but at the end of the Twelfth Quarter Stalingrad, although hard pressed, had not fallen, the evil Manchurian winter was drawing near and the Japanese had not struck their expected blow.

There was no visible change in Russo-Japanese diplomatic relations during the period under review. General Yamashita, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Malaya, was reported to have gone to Kirin in August, but there was no evidence that he had taken over the high command in Manchuria. On September 1 it was officially announced in Tokyo that Mr. Shigenori Togo, the Japanese Foreign Minister, had tendered his resignation to the Emperor "for personal reasons." It was accepted, and the Emperor ordered General Tojo to take over the Foreign Ministry. The Domei Agency said that the change foreshadowed "no important changes in Japan's foreign policy," and added that it was not yet clear whether General Tojo would remain in his three offices of Prime Minister, War Minister and Foreign Minister. In Washington it was believed that the departure of the last civilian Minister did not signify any extension of military control over foreign policy. That control, indeed, had long been complete. But it was pointed out that Japanese policy aimed at obtaining the northern half of Sakhalin island and the control "for the duration" of Eastern Siberia. It was thought that if the Japanese decided that the danger of attack from Siberia was more imminent than the danger from Australia the soldiers would follow this policy more brusquely and violently than a professional diplomatist like Togo could do. Nevertheless, the Japanese, whether from their native caution, or because they were unwilling to oblige Hitler by taking on

a winter campaign on another front, did not appear anxious to force the pace.

On the day when Mr. Togo's resignation was announced, the Japanese Government stated that the Cabinet had approved the setting-up of a "Ministry of Greater East Asia." It would "take charge of administrative affairs in foreign countries and regions in Great East Asia," and it would also supervise political, cultural and economic affairs throughout that region except in Korea, Formosa and southern (Japanese) Sakhalin. Its functions would include all matters relating to the protection of Japanese foreign trade, the development of natural resources in the Japanese sphere and the supervision of enterprises undertaken by exploitation companies. All embassies and legations in Greater East Asia were to be incorporated in the Ministry which would co-operate with the military authorities in these countries.<sup>1</sup> The prospect of being placed under what was really a new Ministry of Exploitation must have been highly distasteful to the Siamese (Thais). They had shown signs of restiveness under Japanese control which had earned them admonitions from their own quisling government and threats from the Japanese, but they had made their bed and they had no one to blame but themselves if they found it hard lying.

There was no improvement in the behaviour of the Japanese troops in China. The story told by Bishop Cleary, head of Saint Columban's Mission in China, to the Chungking correspondent of the *Daily Express* (q.v. October 1) gave an example of their methods. The members of the branch of the Mission at Nancheng in Kiangsi decided to await the arrival of the Japanese, counting on their neutrality as subjects of the Eire Government to protect them. They made a miscount. The Japanese, after shelling the buildings, looted the church, seized sacramental robes, stripped the priests, tore golden crosses from the sisters, carried off Chinese women employed in the mission, smashed the mission's motor-car and destroyed its radios and typewriters.

<sup>1</sup> Reuter's version.

When the Bishop protested and showed Irish passports to the Japanese commander, the barbarian replied, characteristically: "We recognize no neutrals. Except Germans and Italians the whole world is Japan's enemy!"

### 3 : AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The battle of Midway was followed by a temporary lull in the Central Pacific. The Japanese Navy had sustained a disastrous repulse, but the American Navy was not yet strong enough to take a serious counter-offensive against the chief strongholds of Japanese sea-power. The screen of islands covering the Philippines and the approaches to Formosa had been organized for defence. There were seaplane and submarine bases in many atolls; Truk, in the Caroline archipelago,<sup>1</sup> is said to have been made into an important advanced naval base; and there was every reason to believe that the Japanese had done their utmost to strengthen the captured positions of Wake Island and Guam. Direct naval attack on the Japanese coasts, where a strong shore-based air force and powerful coast defences would endanger any hostile fleet even were the main strength of the Japanese Navy engaged elsewhere, was not to be thought of at this stage of the war. A blow at the heart of Japan could only be delivered when the fighting strength of the hostile fleet had been worn down and when the Allies had secured the bases without which any such attempt was doomed to failure and probably to disaster.

But while the centre of this vast oceanic front was quiet there was great activity on both flanks. The Japanese had already advanced their left by the seizure of three of the Aleutian islands, no doubt with the intention of preventing United States and Canadian communication with Russian Pacific ports and also of forestalling any American move against the Kurile islands and Japanese Sakhalin. On his right the enemy had suffered

<sup>1</sup> Called Hogoku by the Japanese.

a serious repulse in the battle of the Coral Sea, but he was preparing to resume his advance from island to island when the Americans for the first time in the campaign took the initiative with a bold and successful attack on his advanced posts in the Solomon Islands. It was in these two widely distant and distinct theatres of war, the cold foggy Aleutian Islands, and still more in the tropical, jungle-clad Solomons and eastern New Guinea that Japanese, Americans and Australians concentrated their activities during the greater part of the period under review. In the North Pacific fighting was confined to the air and sea; in New Guinea and the Solomons land forces were also engaged. On July 17 the U.S. Navy Department gave a résumé of the fighting in the Aleutian Islands. It began on June 3 when a force composed of two small aircraft-carriers, two seaplane tenders, several light cruisers and from four to six destroyers attacked Attu Island and occupied it. On the same day Japanese aircraft attacked Dutch Harbour and Fort Mears and Port Glenn in its neighbourhood. There were three U.S. destroyers, an Army transport, a minesweeper and a coastguard cutter at the base, with an old station ship, the *Northwestern*, which had been beached and was used as a barracks for contractors' workmen. The enemy destroyed her and fired some new barracks and warehouses. No other American ship was hit. Next day U.S. bombers and naval aircraft attacked the Japanese carriers off Attu with uncertain results. The Japanese attacked Dutch Harbour again and Port Glenn. They set fuel tanks alight at Dutch Harbour. They were beaten off at Port Glenn where two fighters were shot down. The American losses in these raids amounted to forty-five killed (one civilian among them) and forty-nine, all soldiers or sailors, wounded.

The Japanese did not repeat their attack on Dutch Harbour. The Americans, on the other hand, raided the Japanese warships whenever the frequent fogs gave their aircraft a chance. They lost "a number" of machines, and they could not prevent the Japanese from occupying two more undefended islands, Agattu and

Kiska. This last was 585 miles west of Dutch Harbour and had a good harbour of which the enemy made prompt use. These raids and attacks by submarines were believed to have cost the enemy three destroyers and a transport sunk and four cruisers, three destroyers, a gunboat and a transport damaged. Some previous American claims, e.g. the sinking of an aircraft-carrier, were dropped. At least seven Japanese aircraft were claimed as destroyed. Meanwhile, U.S. submarines continued to trouble these waters, and on July 21 the Navy Department announced the sinking of three destroyers in addition to those previously announced, and more air raids on the Kiska garrison. Three days later a correspondent of the Japanese Domei Agency was quoted in a Tokyo broadcast as complaining of the climate of these inclement islands, describing road-making across the black treeless hills of Kiska and referring to the frequent attacks by American Army bombers which dropped their missiles "through the fog."

In early August operations became brisker. After an unsuccessful attack by Japanese aircraft on the U.S. destroyer *Kane* on August 3, Army pursuit (fighter) planes caught and destroyed two Japanese seaplanes. On August 8 an American operational force detached from the Pacific Fleet and protected by Navy patrol planes completely surprised Kiska. The Japanese mistaking the first salvos of shells for bombs opened fire with their A.A. batteries at imaginary bombers. Heavy fire from the American cruisers and destroyers silenced the shore batteries, started fires and did much damage in the Japanese camps, losing only one observation aeroplane to the Japanese aircraft. Next day Navy patrol aircraft followed up the naval attack by bombing and damaging two cargo ships in Kiska harbour and sighted another which had been hit by American guns on the previous day and had sunk near the beach. A lull followed, but on August 19 the Navy Department announced the sinking of either a cruiser or a destroyer off the Aleutian Islands by an American submarine. A large

merchantman soon followed the warship to the bottom.<sup>1</sup>

In early September the Americans confined themselves to reconnaissance and one small raid wherein three aircraft were engaged and a large Japanese flying-boat was claimed as destroyed, but on the 14th a large group of Army Liberator heavy bombers escorted by Airacobra and Lockheed Lightning fighters made a heavy low-level attack on ships and shore installations on Kiska. The Japanese A.A. fire was weak ; their aircraft were beaten off, five being shot down and one destroyed on the water, and the two American fighters lost were victims, not of the enemy but of a collision. Two minesweepers were sunk. The Americans claimed to have damaged three cargo ships and three submarines by bombs and machine-gun fire. Storehouses and supply dumps were set alight in the camps and many casualties inflicted.

On September 28 the Navy Department published a *communiqué* describing the results of an earlier attack on Kiska in which Canadian aircraft co-operated with the American Air Force. A transport was damaged and had to be beached, shore installations were bombed and set on fire, two submarines were hit by bombs and seven seaplanes were destroyed.

On September 27 Army bombers attacked Japanese ships near Attu Island and raided Kiska, and next day enemy buildings on the Kiska waterfront and ships in the harbour were their targets. In these operations transport and a submarine were "probably sunk" and a transport and a cargo ship were damaged. Six Zero fighters were shot down against one United States fighter aeroplane. Here and in the south-west Pacific experience proved that the much-advertised Zero, although fast and manoeuvrable, could not stand punishment, and had a way of "disintegrating" in the air under machine-gun fire. On October 3 it became known that early in

<sup>1</sup> The large Japanese destroyers were not easily distinguished from small cruisers, either in silhouette or from the air. It is possible that some of the all too many Japanese cruisers claimed by the Allies as sunk in earlier actions were destroyers (see *The Eleventh Quarter*, Chapter V, note on p. 152). In this case bad visibility prevented identification.

September the Americans had occupied the Andreanof Islands in the centre of the Aleutian chain without incident, in spite of stormy weather and the proximity of the Japanese who neither saw nor apparently even suspected the approach of the motley convoy of ships ranging from large transports to yachts and codfish schooners which brought a strong garrison to the islands, the westernmost of which was only 125 miles from Kiska. Within ten days of the landing an airfield was ready for use and the aircraft which in late September attacked the Japanese-occupied Aleutians used the Andreanof base. The occupation of these islands seemed to foreshadow more intensive air attacks on Attu and Kiska, an indispensable prelude to their eventual recapture.

In the south-west Pacific area air raids and counter-raids marked the first half of July. As before the Japanese concentrated their attacks on Port Moresby, although they also made one small raid on an aerodrome on Horn Island in Torres Straits. Enemy installations in the Lae and Salamaua region in New Guinea, at Dilli and other places in Timor and on the Solomon Islands were the chief Allied targets.

On July 21 a Japanese convoy was sighted and it was attacked at dusk while troops were being landed from the ships at Gona, a mission station between Buna and Ambasi on northern coast of New Guinea. Two allied fighters were lost, but a Japanese floatplane was destroyed, a large transport and a landing barge were sunk, and losses were inflicted on the disembarking troops. These were believed to number about 2,000 men, who were subsequently reinforced. They pushed inland rapidly over easy country consisting largely of open grassland where bicycles could be used on paths and tracks. Their first objective was the large village of Kokoda, fifty-five miles inland, a stopping-place on the overland route across the island which possessed a serviceable airfield. They were checked near Kokoda on July 28, but their patrols showed a highly offensive spirit and it was realized that the check was only temporary. While they advanced here their patrols pushed fifteen miles south of Salamaua



to the village of Mubo, to be surprised and repulsed by allied forces with some loss. Allied aircraft raided Gona and other points in New Guinea and paid attention to the Solomon Islands. After a couple of ineffective night raids on Darwin the Japanese suddenly delivered a heavy attack on the port on July 30. Twenty-seven heavy bombers came over escorted by 22 Zero fighters, but they were brilliantly intercepted by Australian fighters which shot down 2 bombers and 7 fighters for the loss of but 1 machine. On the same day 9 heavy bombers raided Port Hedland on the north-west Australian coast, 800 miles north of Perth, but they did little damage and caused only one casualty, while allied bombers set a transport on fire off Gona. Meanwhile, it became known that the Japanese had occupied the Kei Islands between Timor and New Guinea, but there was no evidence that they had landed any important force there. On August 1 and 2 Allied bombers made several attacks on a Japanese cruiser in the Banda Sea south of Amboyna, but the results were uncertain.

By this date the Japanese had reached Kokoda and were establishing an advanced base there. Australian opinion was perturbed. Vigorous allied air raids on the dumps and camps of the Japanese in New Guinea had not delayed their advance appreciably; there were rumours that they had received reinforcements by sea; they had certainly occupied the Aru and Tenimber islands as well as the Kei group; they were strengthening their positions in the Solomons and, in the words of the correspondent of *The Times* at Canberra (*loc. cit.* August 6), they had established a "formidable arc of island bases" . . . round New Guinea from Lorengau in the Admiralty Islands and Kavieng in New Ireland to Guadalcanar in the Solomons" and were drawing closer and closer. There was a tendency to blame the American High Command for the failure to garrison Gona and an official spokesman at G.H.Q. declared on August 6 that

"the defence line of the Allies in New Guinea was along the almost impassable Owen Stanley mountains, beyond which lies the north coast. With the enemy in partial control of that coast and in control of the sea lanes

from Rabaul leading to it, it would have been impossible to defend this advanced position without sacrificing the troops involved. . . . Isolated positions subject to enemy envelopment are invariably doomed with no commensurate advantages. . . ."

The Australians, however, were not greatly comforted and critics seized upon the description of the Owen Stanley Range as "almost impassable," and referred to the mythical "impenetrability" of the Malayan jungles.<sup>1</sup>

The American official spokesman was justified in saying that any attempt to defend the isolated ports and coastal villages of northern New Guinea would have doomed their garrisons to piecemeal destruction. But the Americans did not, perhaps, realize how deeply the Australians realized their lack of man-power for the defence of the vast coast-line of their island-continent. The publication in Australia on August 6 of a leading article in the *New York Herald Tribune* urging that priority in reinforcement should no longer be given to Australia caused much anxiety among Australians of all parties. The Correspondent of *The Times* in the Dominion gave the following account of the actual situation (*loc. cit.* August 7, Melbourne message) :

"It is not possible to give a full picture of the supply position here without giving information of great value to the enemy, but it can be said that of the great mass of ground forces serving in Australia approximately five-sixths of the total are actually Australians. The number of non-Australian ground troops here is little more than the number of Australians who are at present serving oversea or who have been taken prisoner in various theatres such as the Middle East, Malaya and Java. At sea, also, reinforcements from the United States little more than compensate for the number of Australian ships lost or on service abroad. In the air there is a much greater percentage of American personnel and equipment than on the ground, but when one considers the vast potentialities of American production only the barest trickle is coming to Australia. What is present in Australia could be replaced in three days of the present-day American production. . . ."

Three days later Australian anxieties were temporarily relieved by the encouraging news that the Allied naval forces had taken the offensive against the Japanese in the Solomon Islands. A *communiqué* issued that night by Admiral Nimitz said :

"Forces of the United States Pacific Fleet and the Pacific Ocean areas,

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, Melbourne message published August 7.

assisted by units of the south-west Pacific area, launched offensive operations on the Tulagi area of the Solomon Islands on August 7 (East longitude time)."

Next day Admiral King, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet, announced that these operations aimed at the occupation of the islands in the Tulagi area where the enemy had been "consolidating his positions . . . to use them as a base for offensive operation against our positions which cover the line of communications to Australia and New Zealand." The operations had been under way for about three days. They were under the immediate command of Vice-Admiral Ghormley and under the general control of Admiral Nimitz. Some of the forces under General MacArthur were co-operating. An initial surprise had been effected, but the enemy had counter-attacked with vigour. At least one Allied cruiser had been sunk and two cruisers, two destroyers and a transport had been damaged. Information as to the Japanese losses was still incomplete. Fighting was continuing and the Admiral stressed the importance of the Allies' initiative and the fact that "considerable losses . . . must be expected as the price to be paid for hard-won experience."

Although the Japanese published tales of a disastrous repulse of the Allied fleet with heavy losses it presently became known that the operations were proceeding favourably. It was not, however, until August 30 that the Navy Department published an account of the early stages of this campaign, for such it became, of which the following is a summary :

"The American invasion forces were favoured by an overcast sky and low-hanging clouds which protected them from aerial observation on their approach to the islands. On the night of August 6-7 the weather cleared, but transports and warships proceeded . . . without encountering any opposition.

"The landing operations were begun in the early hours of August 7, under cover of heavy fire from the . . . warships and the bombing and machine-gunning of enemy positions by carrier-based aircraft. The Japanese were wholly unprepared . . . and lost fifteen seaplanes and a small schooner in the harbour. The American dive-bombers were extremely effective in attacking Japanese shore batteries, supply stations and concentrations of troops. Marines specially trained in jungle warfare and hand-to-hand fighting went ashore in landing barges and quickly

established bridgeheads. By nightfall on the first day they were in possession of a strong beachhead in the Tenaru River region on Guadalcanal,<sup>1</sup> had captured most of Tulagi and all of Gavatu, and had taken a position at Halvao, on Florida Island. In some areas the fighting continued all night, and the Marines met particularly heavy resistance in the storming and taking of the island of Tanambogo . . . which is connected with Gavaru by a causeway. Both before and during the landing attacks and after the American forces had established themselves, long-range Army bombers operating from New Caledonia and Australia were engaged . . . in co-ordinated search operations, looking out for sea-borne counter-attacks and at the same time bombing enemy vessels and air-bases on New Britain, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands area.

"The first Japanese counter-attack came on the afternoon of August 7. Twenty-five heavy bombers attacked but failed to hit any of their targets. Anti-aircraft fire from surface vessels brought down two and damaged two more. Forty minutes later ten dive-bombers attacked the American ships and one bomb damaged a destroyer. Two attackers were shot down by the ships. The first day's fighting therefore had cost the enemy heavily in men and aircraft and had robbed them of the vital positions in the Guadalcanal and Tulagi area.

"That night and next morning in the face of sporadic attacks by scattered enemy troops, supplies and equipment were hurriedly unloaded from ships and sent ashore. At noon some forty torpedo-carrying aircraft attacked the ships in the harbour, hitting an American destroyer and an unloaded transport. The attackers, however, lost fourteen aircraft, twelve to the ships and U.S. fighters and two to shore batteries. The total enemy loss of aircraft during the two days amounted to forty-seven machines of various types.

"By sundown on August 8 the American-occupied area of Guadalcanal had been expanded, the 'nearly completed' airfield had been captured and enemy resistance on Tulagi, Gavatu and Tanambogo had been overcome. Large quantities of ammunition and supplies were taken and much equipment which the enemy was using for the development of a major air-base.

"American unloading operations continued during the night of August 8-9. The Japanese tried to disrupt these with a strong thrust by surface vessels, but their attack was intercepted by cruisers and destroyers and was repulsed before reaching the troops. 'Close-range fighting in this action resulted in damage to the enemy and to our forces,' said the Navy report."

It gave no details of this action, but on August 20 it was made known in Australia that H.M.A.S. *Canberra* (Captain F. E. Getting) had been lost in its course. The story of the naval engagement was not published, for good reasons, by the Navy Department until the heavy losses incurred had been made good. On October 12 the Navy Department issued a *communiqué* explaining the circumstances of the American attack on the Solomons which was inspired by the desire to prevent the Japanese

<sup>1</sup> The Americans used the form "Guadalcanal," an alternative for "Guadalcanar," which is now seemingly established.

from establishing a control over these islands and Eastern New Guinea

"which would have put the Japanese in a position to launch a seaborne thrust at Port Darwin and Australia, and would have seriously threatened our supply lines to Australia and New Zealand, as well as our bases in the New Hebrides, New Caledonia and the Fiji Islands.

"It was necessary, therefore, that these designs should be blocked by our capturing and utilizing his key positions in the South-Eastern Solomons. This was accomplished on August 7, when United States forces surprised and captured the Japanese positions in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area. . . ."

After briefly mentioning the Japanese reaction to the landing and the air raids on transports and shore positions which were immediately opened by the Japanese but failed to prevent the U.S. marines from seizing most of the key positions aimed at, the *communiqué* explained that additional troops and stores were being unloaded from transports and supply ships, and it was imperative that these operations should be successfully completed. Groups of cruisers and destroyers were therefore disposed on each side of Savo Island to guard the western entrances to the transport area. An additional force was stationed near the transports "to provide close coverage within the harbour." At about 1.43 a.m. on August 9 Japanese aircraft dropped flares over the transports and supply ships.

"Simultaneously a force of enemy cruisers and destroyers skirted the south coast of Savo Island at high speed and headed in the direction of the transports and supply ships which were silhouetted in the illuminated area. The rapidly-moving enemy sighted our covering unit located to the south-east of Savo Island, and opened fire immediately with guns and torpedoes, seriously damaging and setting on fire the Australian cruiser *Canberra* (7,280 tons)."

The *Canberra* received two broadsides at a range of about 3,000 yards. Heavily hit, with all the men on the 4-inch gun-deck killed and her commanding officer, Captain F. E. Getting, mortally wounded, she was out of action in ten minutes. She was abandoned four hours later. The survivors escaped on rafts and were rescued by an American destroyer. Of her complement of 816 officers and men 84 were killed or "missing, believed killed," and 109 were wounded. Captain Getting had

continued to direct operations although wounded to death until he was carried on board a destroyer.<sup>1</sup>

Having struck this blow the Japanese, after a brief encounter with the cruiser screen south-east of Savo, altered course to proceed across the passage north-east of the island.

"Here," the *communiqué* related, "they encountered our north-east screen of cruisers and destroyers and a battle at close range resulted. The action was fought with guns and torpedoes, with the target illuminated by searchlights and star shells. The enemy fire was heavy and accurate, and the U.S. cruisers *Quincy* (9,375 tons) and *Vincennes* (9,400 tons) which were hit repeatedly, sank during the night. A third cruiser, the *Astoria* (9,950 tons), was badly damaged, and burned throughout the night. She sank the following morning. It was not possible to determine the extent of the damage inflicted on the Japanese warships by our screening forces. The enemy withdrew to the north-west without attempting to attack our transports and supply ships.

"Although the majority of the personnel were saved, there were many casualties, as a result of the loss of the four Allied cruisers. The loss of these has been offset by an appropriate re-allocation of ships made possible by new construction."

It may be deduced, without wishful thinking, from this report that the Japanese had been too hard hit themselves in this action or had lost too many cruisers and destroyers in the East Indies, the Coral Sea and off Midway, to spare strength to attack the transports and supply ships then or to return and pursue them later. They had, none the less, won a remarkable success to which speed, good gunnery and bold tactics had all contributed. They had destroyed four powerful cruisers and the destroyer *Jarvis* which was damaged and left for repairs after the action was never seen again. Her complement of 172 souls were presumed lost.

To revert to the Navy Department's report of August 30, it further said that

"the landing of stores . . . was completed by nightfall on August 9 and the transports and cargo ships left the area. Next day by noon the Marines had overcome all major opposition in the islands of Guadalcanal, Tulagi, Tanambogo, Gavaru and Makambo, and on portions of Florida Island, and were engaged in pursuing isolated patrols which had withdrawn into the interior. Mopping-up operations had continued."

<sup>1</sup> Great satisfaction was caused in Australia by the gift to the Commonwealth Government of H.M.S. cruiser *Shropshire* which was re-named H.M.S. *Canberra* with the approval of the King and his Government.

The New York correspondent of *The Times*, on whose clear summaries of the Navy Department's Reports the preceding description of the fighting has been based, added that Press messages received from the islands showed that the Japanese put up a most desperate resistance. Surprised as they were, "so that they fled from some positions leaving half-consumed food and much of their personal equipment behind them, they . . . had no thought of giving up. . . . They killed themselves rather than give up." None the less, 450 of them were captured.

Another example of the ruthlessness of the fighting between Americans and Japanese was the attack by a force of Marines, supported by U.S. warships, on Makin Island in the Gilbert Islands where the Japanese had established a seaplane base. They landed on a moonless night on August 17 at several places. The Japanese rushed parties in trucks and on motor-cycles to the points under attack. They used hand grenades and machine-guns, but they were never given a chance of using their flame-throwers, and the most effective fire which the attack encountered came from their snipers, clad in green and fastened by their belts to the tops of tall palms. At 11.30 a.m. on August 18 Japanese aircraft, apparently from the Marshall Islands, 200 miles to the north-west, made an attack with bombs and machine-guns and repeated it twice during the day, but inflicted no loss on the Americans and killed some of the garrison. On April 19 they made four attacks without killing a single American. Late that day the Americans began to withdraw to their ships. By this time only eight Japanese were left and six of these were accounted for. Two could not be found. The remainder, 348 in number, had fought to the death. The officer commanding the expedition was Commander J. M. Haines, U.S. Navy. The Marines were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Carlson, with Major James Roosevelt, the President's son, second in command. The Marines lost about forty killed and wounded. They destroyed three wireless stations, 1,000 barrels of petrol and quantities of supplies.

The Navy accounted for two seaplanes, a small transport and a gunboat.

Roughly as they had been handled, the Japanese had no intention of leaving the Americans in undisturbed possession of the southern Solomons, or of slackening their offensive in New Guinea. The last six weeks of the quarter saw an intensification of the Papuan campaign and counter-attacks on the American-occupied islands. The enemy does not seem to have been strong enough to mount both operations simultaneously. He required a number of war vessels to escort his transports; he was probably ignorant of the precise location of the main American naval forces in the Pacific—and it may be noted that both the raid on Makin Island and the seizure of Guadalcanal and Florida Islands surprised him. So he alternated his landings of reinforcements between New Guinea and the Solomons while keeping up an active and fairly regular air offensive on both fronts.

On August 23 a strong air attack on Guadalcanal was intercepted by American fighters and 21 machines were brought down against "slight" American loss. On the night of August 23–24 Japanese destroyers shelled the American shore positions there, and on August 24 a cruiser and a transport appeared off the north of the island and were hit and set on fire by bombers. On the 25th sixteen bombers and 12 Zero fighters were beaten off, losing 7 bombers and 5 fighters to one American machine. On that day the U.S. Navy Department announced that a strong Japanese naval force had approached the islands from the north-east and had been heavily attacked by Flying Fortresses and carrier-based Navy aircraft. The action according to the Navy Department was over by August 27. Two Japanese aircraft-carriers were badly hit by bombs and one, identified as the small *Ryuzo*, was believed to have been sunk. The Americans also claimed hits on a battleship, at least one cruiser, two destroyers and several miscellaneous ships. It seemed that there had been encounters between surface ships of the rival fleets as well as between warships and aircraft during the two days, and it was certain that

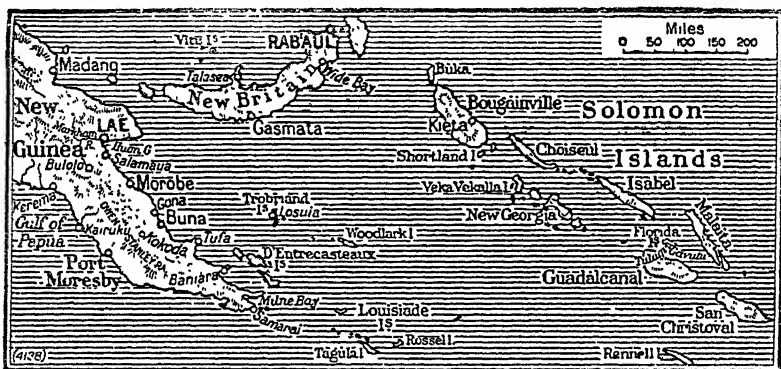


the Japanese fleet had drawn off. But on August 28 one of the most important officials in the U.S.A. warned newspapers against publishing accounts of these operations which might lead the public to believe that "a smashing victory" had been achieved. He disclosed that there had been two phases in the enemy's activities after the American capture of the southern Solomons. In the first phase there had been several air attacks in which the Americans had "come off pretty well,"<sup>1</sup> destroying 30 to 32 Japanese aircraft and losing 4, and the enemy had also landed a force of 700 infantry on Guadalcanal. This force had been destroyed. In the second phase units of the Japanese Fleet had made, not a full-scale offensive, but a reconnaissance in force towards the islands. The reconnaissance had withdrawn and the Americans had hit some ships, and hoped that they had sunk some. Later it was announced that the force which had been landed by night on Guadalcanal had been attacked at once by American Marines. About thirty-five men were taken prisoners and the rest were killed. The Americans lost less than a hundred killed and wounded.

The failure of this attempt and the retreat of the Japanese reconnoitring squadron did not, however, terminate Japanese attempts on the southern Solomon Islands. Japanese aircraft and submarines attempted to prevent the landing of reinforcements and stores on Guadalcanal and Florida and sank the U.S. destroyer *Blue* and the small transport *Calhoun*; land-based bombers escorted by fighters made numerous attacks on Guadalcanal and Tulagi while destroyers and submarines running inshore at night shelled the American positions without doing great damage. The American aircraft took a heavy toll of Japanese machines. Twenty were shot down on three successive days early in September and by the middle of the month they had lost 143 aircraft since the first day of the American landing. Under cover of these aerial and naval attacks the enemy made several attempts to land troops on Guadalcanal, where some small detachments were holding out in the jungle.

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, New York message published.

On September 3 Grummann fighters and Douglas Dauntless dive-bombers caught a landing-party near San Jorge Island sixty-five miles north of Guadalcanal airfield and sank landing barges and small boats full of men. Two days later another landing-party was attacked near the western end of the island and badly mauled by the Americans. On September 6 American bombers attacked Japanese installations on Gizo Island in the New Georgia group of the Solomons which was thought to be the enemy's shore base for his bombers. Some Japanese detachments were nevertheless landed on



By courtesy of *The Times*

#### EASTERN PAPUA AND THE SOLOMONS

Guadalcanal and joined parties which had sought refuge in the interior. The American Marines waged vigorous war on these with the aid of dive-bombers and fighter aircraft.

But the main weight of the Japanese attack had now shifted to New Guinea. Under cover of the naval reconnaissance or demonstration against the southern Solomons a small convoy escorted by warships made for Milne Bay at the south-eastern "tail" of New Guinea. It was sighted on August 25 when a gunboat was sunk by Allied aircraft and two transports were damaged. Next day the convoy appeared in Milne Bay and about 2,000 troops and some men of a Korean labour unit were landed, in spite of air attacks gallantly pressed in most unfavourable

weather. On the same day Buna was raided and Allied pilots claimed the destruction of six Japanese machines on the ground. It should be said, however, that the Japanese made similar claims on occasion, and it is not to be supposed that all their attacks on Allied airfields in the Northern Territory of Australia, and at Port Moresby and Guadalcanal were entirely fruitless, although they were less frequent than the Allied sorties against Japanese air bases.

The attack on Milne Bay turned out badly for the enemy. The bad weather, of which torrential rain was one constant feature, had prevented them from reconnoitring Milne Bay thoroughly and when they landed they were surprised to find themselves hotly attacked by Australian troops. Our ground forces were well supported by Kittyhawk and Airacobra fighters and Flying Fortress and Marauder bombers. In four days beginning from August 25 the Allies claimed 35 Japanese aircraft destroyed at Milne Bay and elsewhere in New Guinea against the loss of only two fighters, which seemed to show that the much-advertised Zero fighters were beatable by well-handled fighter aircraft. On the ground the Japanese made no progress. The mud, although it also impeded the Australian infantry, proved a serious obstacle to the Japanese and particularly to their light tanks; the Australians fought with intelligence and fury; frequent attacks by our aircraft destroyed much enemy equipment. On the night of August 29 a Japanese cruiser and eight destroyers entered the harbour, it was thought to bring reinforcements, but in reality to remove as many Japanese as possible. Next day the enemy had gone, but for a few groups left to be hunted down and killed by the Australians. Of about 2,000 men landed 700 perished, including some wounded men shot by their own people, apparently lest they should give information to their captors. Three unused aeroplanes and much other equipment fell into Australian hands.

This failure did not appreciably delay the Japanese advance from Gona. After a number of minor encounters in which the Japanese, clad in green, lightly, but effectively

armed, extremely mobile and using every device and ruse, had outmanœuvred their opponents, they reached Myola, about nine miles from the gap in the "impene-trable" Owen Stanley Range. The Australians had about 1,000 casualties in this fighting in which the enemy made effective use of his 2-inch mortars and his "tommy-guns," of which one was apportioned to every third infantryman.

On September 10 Allied Headquarters, which had described the situation as "static" on the previous day, had to announce the forcing of the gap, and the enemy's advance to Efogi, about forty-four miles by air from Port Moresby. Once again the enemy's great mobility, jungle-craft and tactical skill had given him an important success. The dominance of the Allied Air Forces on this front did not counterbalance this superiority. Machine-gunning and the use of anti-personnel bombs had only a limited effect in the jungle, and aerial reconnaissance was greatly handicapped.

More effective were raids on the Japanese bases on the northern coast of Papua, where the airfield was "plastered" with bombs on September 11 and 12, and the American pilots claimed seventeen machines destroyed on the ground, making a total of fifty in a month's raiding. On September 11 Flying Fortresses attacked two destroyers off Normanby Island, to the north of Milne Bay, and their pilots claimed to have left one sinking while her crew took to the rafts. On September 13 Marauder medium bombers dropped seventeen tons on the Japanese airfield at Lae and returned unscathed. Salamaua, Rabaul and enemy cargo ships in the seas east of New Guinea were frequently attacked during this period by U.S. bombers and by the R.A.A.F. Buna was the target of several heavy attacks in the last half of September and over thirty invasion "barges" were destroyed between the 18th and the 30th. These were of various types, one of the most useful being a broad-beamed wooden barge thirty-five feet long with a gun mounted forward and a speed of from twelve to fifteen knots. The speed, light draught and relative noiselessness of these craft make them

very serviceable in the amphibious operations wherein the Japanese excel.

After they had crossed the Owen Stanley mountains the Japanese advance slowed down. The invaders unquestionably found it difficult to keep up their supplies so far from their base and the delay gave the garrison of Port Moresby time to strengthen their defences. Reinforcements also reached the port. It was not until September 15 that the enemy advanced to collide with Australian troops between Efogi and Ioribaiwa, a small Papuan village on the overland track to Kokoda and Buna. A number of skirmishes between patrols followed while the Allied fighter aircraft attacked any visible objectives on the Japanese line of communications, paying particular attention to the Wairopi<sup>1</sup> bridge over the Kumusi River, one end of which they demolished on September 26. These attacks and the activities of our patrols forced back the Japanese outposts and the enemy took up a defensive position on the Ioribaiwa Ridge.

By this time 25-pounder field-guns, heavier metal than anything employed by the Japanese, had reached the Australian front, but doubts were expressed as to the utility of so heavy a piece in such thick country where such guns had to be taken to pieces and brought up on the backs of pack animals or porters. But there was no doubt of the value of the Beaufighters which had reached Australia from Britain and were used after being assembled for the aerial counter-offensive over New Guinea. The U.S. Douglas light bomber, a development of the excellent Boston, had also come into action on this front. The arrival of new weapons was accompanied by new tactics. The Australian militia, keen and adaptable soldiers, were now learning rapidly from their enemies and were becoming mobile and self-supporting in the jungles. At the end of September the situation suddenly improved. On September 29 a *communiqué* issued from Allied Headquarters stated :

"Our ground troops have launched an infiltrating and outflanking attack on the enemy's defensive positions on the Ioribaiwa Ridge and are

<sup>1</sup> Not a Papuan name but "pidgin-English" for "wire-rope."

making progress." On the last day of the month another *communiqué* announced that the Japanese had lost the Ridge to our troops and had abandoned a "position . . . of natural strength which had been prepared for defence by barricades, obstructions and field trenches," leaving behind them "quantities of supplies and equipment."

They retired to Nauro, ten miles north of the Ridge, but on October 1 Allied Headquarters announced that our forward troops had captured this point and were continuing to advance. There had been no contact with the main body of the enemy, who were still retiring and had abandoned still more equipment and supplies. It appeared that the enemy had stretched his communications almost to breaking-point, and our increasingly heavy air attacks on his bases and his more exposed transport routes in northern New Guinea had confronted him with the choice of shortening his communications or standing to fight at a disadvantage.

While the situation improved in New Guinea it certainly grew no worse in the Solomons during the last half of September. Here, and in New Guinea waters, Allied air attacks had compelled the Japanese to modify their methods. The heavy toll of cargo ships taken by the Allied bombers appears to have determined the enemy to use small craft for their attempts on the American-occupied island of Guadalcanal. These could be concealed in creeks and inlets by day and were less easily observed by aircraft at night. On September 15 an American official report showed that the enemy had recently increased the intensity of his bombing attacks by air and his bombardments by surface vessels, and that he had succeeded in landing small detachments by night to reinforce his ground troops. The Guadalcanal airfield was the chief Japanese objective. In four days of air actions the U.S. pilots shot down 5 bombers, 13 Zero fighters and 3 seaplanes (September 11-14), suffering much less loss themselves. An attack by Japanese surface ships on the fortified positions on the coast was delivered on the night of September 11-12, and on that night strong Japanese patrols encountered the American Marines. Heavy fighting followed, and on the night of September 13-14 surface craft again shelled the United

States positions while the Japanese infantry made a heavy attack on the airfield and were beaten off with loss.

On September 13, too, a squadron, including two battleships, had been sighted some distance north-west of Tulagi. Heavy bombing by Flying Fortresses which may have hit the battleships made this armada turn away. After this reconnaissance or demonstration the Japanese patrols were somewhat less and the Americans much more aggressive on Guadalcanal, but American activity was most pronounced in the air. Japanese bases on Gizo Island, at Rabaul and in Rekata Bay on the northern coast of Santa Isabel Island were attacked and the Americans claimed hits on a large transport and a cruiser.

American vessels had not gone scatheless. On September 26 the disappearance of the *Jarvis* was announced and it was further stated that the transport *Little* had been sunk more recently off these islands, and that her commander and half her crew had perished. On September 30 the Navy Department further announced that on August 8 a Japanese torpedo-plane "crashed into" and set on fire the naval transport *George F. Elliott* which had to be abandoned and was destroyed, and that more recently the U.S. ship *Gregory* had been sunk by Japanese gunfire. In these two cases most of the crews escaped.

Towards the end of September the persistent Japanese renewed their attacks on Guadalcanal, sending in two large formations of bombers escorted by fighters on September 27, when 18 bombers and 13 fighters were engaged, and on the following day when 18 Zeros escorted 25 bombers. The first attack was intercepted and four bombers and five fighters were shot down. The second was a disastrous failure. Again the Japanese were intercepted. They jettisoned their bombs in the sea, but that availed them nothing, for the American fighters broke in among the bombers and shot 23 into the water and a fighter with them. On September 25 and 26 heavy American Army bombers had attacked Rekata Bay, Tonolei harbour and Japanese ships south-east of the

Buka passage, setting a cruiser on fire, damaging and probably sinking a cargo ship and destroying six seaplanes. The *communiqué* announcing this series of successes added that while forty-two enemy aircraft had been destroyed and three more damaged in four days, no U.S. aeroplane had been lost in these encounters. It also said that the Marines on Guadalcanal and Florida were continuing active patrol operations, supported by dive-bombers, against the Japanese on these islands, that they had expanded their positions "somewhat" and had engaged and destroyed several small hostile detachments.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the principal events of the campaign in the Pacific during the quarter. The Japanese were still far from being defeated ; they obviously intended to recover the Solomons if they could and to improve their position in New Guinea still further. In the Aleutians they were well placed to observe and harass any American attempt to attack the Japanese "by the back door," and also to threaten United States communications with Russia. But with every week the strength of the Allies in the south-west Pacific grew greater. As Admiral T. C. Hart, commander of the Allied naval forces in the Far East earlier in the year, pointed out in the first of two articles published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, offensive war had begun ; the Allies had inflicted heavy loss on the Japanese. The American Navy had thwarted their plans in the battles of Midway and the Coral Sea and the American public did not realize what excellent and effective work United States submarines were doing in other parts of the Pacific. In late July it became known that the Japanese liner *Taiyo* had been sunk by a submarine off Hong Kong in May and the entire personnel of a department of the Mitsui industrial organization who were being sent to reorganize the industrial undertakings seized in "South-eastern Asia" by the Japanese Army had perished.

On July 25 the Navy Department stated that a modern destroyer, a medium-sized tanker and three cargo ships had been sunk and other vessels damaged by U.S.

<sup>1</sup> Navy Department announcement of September 28.



submarines in Far Eastern waters in actions not previously announced. On August 23 the Navy Department announced the sinking of two more cargo ships and a transport. The next report published on September 17 said that two large cargo ships, one of medium size and a patrol boat, had been sunk, and a large tanker set on fire and other ships damaged in actions in Far Eastern waters not relating to the fighting in the Solomons. These successes brought the number of Japanese ships of all types sunk or damaged by American submarines to 107. Two supply ships in convoy were also torpedoed and left on fire by a Dutch submarine in July. Yet another announcement from the Navy Department on October 2 reported further substantial successes by United States submarines in Far Eastern waters. A large sea-plane tender, a large cargo and passenger ship, a large freighter and two medium-sized cargo ships were sunk, two medium-sized cargo ships were classed as "probables," and a tanker was damaged. These constant losses, together with those incurred in the south-west Pacific and elsewhere, undoubtedly caused the Japanese Government much concern and it became known that orders had been given to shipbuilding firms in the Dutch East Indies to construct wooden ships of small tonnage for coastal and inter-island traffic.

Little news came from the Dutch islands. The Japanese reported in September that Lieutenant de Jong, a very gallant Dutch officer who had held out in the interior of Celebes with a small force and had harassed the Japanese, had been captured. They claimed that all resistance had ceased in Sumatra and Java, but this was far from certain, although the remnants of the Dutch forces, if still resisting, could only wage a guerrilla war on a small scale in forests and mountains. Nothing was known publicly of events in the interior of the huge island of Borneo, but news reached Australia from Timor that the Dutch and Australian garrison had retreated into the interior and there defied Japanese attempts to dislodge them from their positions. It was also known that after occupying Dilli the Japanese had

looted the city, although it was Portuguese, and had set up brothels for the troops, forcing many women who were not prostitutes into them. This aroused the furious indignation of the population, who co-operated with the Allied troops in the interior.

Several of the smaller Dutch islands between Timor and New Guinea were seemingly occupied by Japanese naval detachments in July and August. The enemy claimed to have "killed or captured" the defenders, and it was somewhat surprising that these small garrisons should have been left to their fate, when they might have reinforced the Allies in Australia. In one instance the Japanese lost heavily. An Amboynese sergeant who commanded the thirteen men who formed the garrison of Tenimber let the Japanese land at Saumlaki port on the night of July 30 and then shot up the column of marines as they approached the village from the jetty. It was not until the enemy had retreated, shelled the village with 6-inch guns and landed at another point that the Indonesian soldiers made their way across the island and escaped to Australia by sea. The occupation of these islands did not, however, result in any intensification of Japanese pressure on northern and north-western Australia. The Japanese claimed to have bombed Darwin on September 17 and a few of their machines dropped bombs there ineffectively on September 26 and 27. Their attention was now monopolized by New Guinea and the Solomons. Australian aircraft, on the other hand, continued to harass their shipping off Timor and the smaller islands north-west and north of Darwin, to bomb buildings and warehouses in Japanese occupation and to beat off such Japanese fighters as attacked them there.

NOTE.—The alleged appearance of a Japanese submarine in the Atlantic is referred to in Chapter II.

## 4: MORE BUSHIDO

On July 22 the steamers *Asama Maru* and *Conte Verde* arrived at Lourenço Marques in Portuguese East Africa with 1,560 evacuees, most of them Americans, from Japan, Shanghai, and other parts of the Japanese-occupied Far East. They had painful stories to tell of the brutality with which Allied nationals had been treated by their captors and of the cruel conditions under which prisoners of war were kept at Hong Kong and elsewhere. A special correspondent of *The Times* wrote (*loc. cit.* July 28) :

"Although the Japanese record is lightened by courageous deeds of kindness extended to captives by individual Japanese, especially women, the military and the police have been following their own vaunted tradition and practices dating back to primitive ages. These range all the way from disregard of diplomatic privileges and immunities to the imprisonment and torture of British and American newspaper correspondents, business men and missionaries, the massacre of British and American wounded captured at Hong Kong and at Wake Island as well as British miners in Thailand, and the rape and subsequent slaughter of British women and girls, including nurses in war hospitals. Enough information regarding such practices has already percolated into Japan for some Japanese, who are sensitive to world opinion, to be frankly ashamed."

British subjects were generally treated worse than Americans. About twelve British prisoners committed suicide after being tortured by the police who sought to force them to confess that they had been engaged in espionage. Many more were beaten, half strangled, subjected to the water torture in which buckets of water were poured into their mouths and nostrils. "Slugging squads" sent to concentration camps beat prisoners when they could not cajole them to testify to their good treatment in the Japanese Press or over the radio. More than one broadcast testifying to Japanese humanity was believed by relatives of the speaker who knew the voice to have been extorted by torture. Some of the Americans were told that their wives and children would suffer unless they confessed to acts of espionage. They said, however, that they did not know of any cases of physical abuse of women or children in Japan or of any

deaths of American prisoners there. Malnutrition caused not a few deaths among the people interned at Hong Kong and a prisoner in China, Mr. J. Powell, lost all but the heels of both feet from beriberi and gangrene and his weight fell from 160 lb. to 75 lb.

Tokyo complained bitterly of the "vile propaganda" of their enemies, but the evidence was too strong to be dismissed in this fashion, and the evidence of witnesses of the horrors of Hong Kong and of Europeans who had escaped from the Dutch Indies and captured Pacific islands left no doubt as to the frequent savagery and almost universal petty tyranny of the Japanese soldiery and police.

In the Dutch Indies children and European women did not appear to have been ill-treated, although European male prisoners were frequently subjected to gross violence. The maltreatment of Indonesian women was vouched for by several refugees. In the Philippines the Japanese shot not a few Filipinos on charges of sabotage, theft of military stores and attacks on sentries, and a broadcast picked up at Colombo on July 28 deplored "acts highly prejudicial to the co-prosperity sphere" and threatened severer punishments.

The steamer *Kamakura* brought the next consignment of civilians, among whom were the staff of the British Embassy at Tokyo, the staff of our Legation at Bangkok, and many British and Allied civilians from Japan or Japanese-occupied territory. Like their predecessors they experienced great kindness from the Portuguese at Lourenço Marques. The diplomatists were naturally reticent, but journalists and others entirely agreed with the United States Ambassador to Japan, Mr. Grew, who was allowed by the State Department to broadcast to the American people after his return in the steamer *Gripholm* on August 25. He said that there was danger of the Pacific war ending in a stalemate unless the United States waged an offensive war and crushed the Japanese military machine.

"We are up," he said, "against a powerful fighting machine whose moral cannot and will not be broken by economic hardships; a people who, individually and collectively, will gladly sacrifice their lives for their

Emperor and their nation, and who can be brought to earth only by physical defeat, by being ejected physically from the areas which they have progressively conquered ; or by progressive attrition of their naval power and merchant marine which will finally result in cutting off their homeland from all connexion with, and access to, those outlying areas ; or by complete defeat in battle."

It may be added that the Japanese Government flatly refused to exchange British subjects from Hong Kong, Singapore or other British territory seized by them since the outbreak of war, no doubt because they knew too much of the misdeeds of the Japanese troops. The American Red Cross through its chairman, Mr. Norman Davis, revealed on August 29 that Japan refused an assurance of safe-conduct to neutral vessels which would carry food, clothing and medical comforts to American prisoners and internees in Japan, Hong Kong and the Philippines. The Japanese authorities, moreover, had failed to report the names of the majority of American prisoners whom they held. In these circumstances the United States could only continue to protest against the failure of the Japanese Government to adhere to and apply the provisions of the two Geneva conventions of 1929 which they had promised to respect.

NOTE.—Other references to recent Japanese misdeeds in China and elsewhere are made in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this Chapter.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE AMERICAS

#### I : THE UNITED STATES

The impending election to Congress cast its shadow increasingly over American affairs during the course of the twelfth quarter. On November 3, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, a little more than one-third of the Senate and the entire House of Representatives, 435 strong, were to be chosen in contested elections. The prospect was not too agreeable. Feeling themselves immune from any imminent danger of attack from the east and reasonably safe, after Midway and the Coral Sea, from Japanese invasion, a great number of American politicians turned gleefully to home politics. But as these could not in many cases be dissociated from the national war effort there was a marked risk that the sectional character of United States politics might react adversely on the preparations of the American Union. "Questions of national urgency," wrote a correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* July 23):

"like the imposition of petrol rationing as a means to rubber conservation are discussed in excessively local terms. Oil-producing States cannot see the reason for a highly inconvenient austerity ; nor can their congressional spokesmen. . . . In California, the efficiency of the State Guard, a body which has or should have important security duties, is not high at the moment, and, in the opinion of some good judges, will not become high until after the elections. For there is war between the Democratic Governor Olson and his Republican enemies in the Legislature, which makes the State Guard an issue in campaign politics. Then the immense growth of federal activity caused by the war has created patronage problems. In more cities than one, local Democrats have seen with pain important administrative jobs going to Republicans. The leaders of the party give no countenance to these naïve claims to proprietary rights in the war effort ; but that they are made shows that politics is still politics."

A particularly marked instance of this tendency to play politics was the attempt of what is known as "the

farm *bloc*" in Congress to emasculate the anti-inflation Bill which was introduced by the Administration. The Bill contained provisions for the fixing of agricultural prices. On September 23 the House of Representatives passed it with amendments on farm prices having the effect of opening the way to an increase of 5 per cent in the cost of living. It seemed that a collision between Congress and the President was inevitable. The Senate was obviously perturbed. On September 29 it adopted the farm *bloc* proposal by 48 votes to 43, but next day it nullified its action and adopted the "Prices and Wages Stabilization Bill" as proposed by the Administration with slight amendments.

With spies and agents of the Axis the U.S. authorities dealt severely. In July many such were arrested and twenty-nine leaders of the German-American Bund were indicted on charges of attempting to induce members of the Bund to resist conscription. An important arrest announced on July 10 by the New York head of the Federal Bureau of Administration was that of one Karl Friedrich Bahr who arrived in the United States in the repatriation liner *Drottningholm*, well provided with money and instructions and materials enabling him to impersonate a Jewish family which "had ceased to exist."

Bahr was German-born but had been educated in America in 1926-38 and had then obtained an American exchange student's scholarship to study in Hanover where the Nazi organization, *Studentwerk*, put him in touch with the Gestapo. On August 6 Max Stephan, a restaurant-keeper of Detroit, who had hidden a German airman after he had escaped into the United States from a Canadian prison camp, was sentenced to be hanged. The principal witness against him was the man whom he had helped! On August 8 six of the eight German saboteurs who had landed from submarines in Florida and Long Island were put to death. All eight had been sentenced to death by the Military Commission appointed by the President to try the case, but two had their sentences commuted to imprisonment in recognition of the assistance which they had given to the Government

in tracking down their associates. Bahr was sentenced to thirty years' imprisonment on September 2, and several American "Fascists," "Silvershirts" and such-like were imprisoned for sedition.

There were strikes, and some very absurd and annoying ones in the United States during this period, but the intention behind them was not treasonable and in several cases the management shared some of the blame. More interesting to Labour on each side of the Atlantic was the failure to establish a British-Russian-American trade union committee and a subsequent attempt to set up an Anglo-American committee. Sir Walter Citrine brought the first proposal, which had the support of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress and also of the Soviet All-Union Central Council, to the American Federation of Labour, which had long-standing contacts with the British Trade Union Congress. But as might have been foreseen, the A.F.L. disliked and feared Communism and refused to link up with the Soviet trade unions. But the federation did suggest the formation of an Anglo-American committee to balance the Anglo-Russian committee. The General Council of the T.U.C. agreed, but it had hoped that the American representation on a three-party or two-party committee would include representatives of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (C.I.O.) and the Railway brotherhoods. Unhappily the formula prepared by the A.F.L. to give effect to the British desire for full American representation on the proposed joint committee was couched in terms which the C.I.O. regarded as insulting. It provided for equal representation of the T.U.C. and the A.F.L., "with the privilege extended to the American Federation of Labour to include in the representation of American Labour any other bona fide trade union body." The C.I.O., which claimed equal status with the A.F.L., was indignant at the suggestion that it should be admitted to the committee at the discretion of the federation and not by right; the feud between the two great Labour groups revived. Sir Walter Citrine said (at the Trade Union Congress at Blackpool on September 10) that an approach



by the British Government was the reason for the postponement of an Anglo-American Labour meeting in the United States on September 23 and admitted that Mr. Green, the President of the A.F.L., also held that the meeting should be postponed. So the negotiations were dropped, perhaps for a long time.

The President made several important speeches and statements during the quarter. On August 21 he told the Press conference that it was the wish of the United States Government that all those persons who were committing barbarities against the civilian population of the countries which they occupied "should have to stand in the courts of law of the countries which they are oppressing and answer for their acts."

On August 31 he defined the role of the American Navy in a rousing broadcast; on September 7, in a message to Congress, he gave the warning that price-control was only possible if it were all-inclusive and told Congressmen that should they fail to act adequately he would accept the responsibility and act. The sequel, which has been related earlier in this section, showed that he persuaded both Houses although they went through motions of revolt.

On August 23 Mr. Donald Nelson, the Chairman of the War Production Board, gave the country what the Washington correspondent of *The Times* described (*loc. cit.* August 24) as "the most comprehensive picture that has so far been given of American war production." He told the Press that the Army, the Navy and the Maritime Commission had been drawing up their schedules of production in semi-independence; but they would do so no longer as all "are working now for me." He then gave the Press details as to various items of production during the month of July, which may be summed up as follows :

*Aircraft* : 11 per cent higher than in June but below expectation, notably in fighters. *Ordnance* : 26 per cent higher than the June output and very close to the schedule. *Naval Construction* : 22 per cent beyond that of June and improving. *Merchant Ship Construction* : A 6 per cent increase or nearly on schedule. *Tanks* : An improvement on the June figures of 35 per cent of medium tanks and of 15 per cent in the lighter types. Both

well ahead of schedule. *A.A. Guns* : An increase of from 50 per cent to 64 per cent. Mr. Nelson added that in the case of aircraft, engines were the limiting factor; but a large new engine plant was being built in the Middle West to meet this difficulty.

On the whole the situation was fairly satisfactory, although total production was still 7 per cent below forecasts, and in one particular American optimism had been ill-founded. The belief that enough synthetic rubber would be produced in the United States by the spring of 1943 to meet the military requirements of the nation and its allies seemed likely to prove fallacious, and the supplies of wild rubber from the forests of Brazil could not be expected to make good the deficit. In these circumstances the increased interest of the United States in the rubber-producing territories of Liberia and the French and Belgian Congo was natural. Meanwhile the approach of the elections had impelled Congress to pass a Bill under the terms of which a "Rubber Supply Agency," independent of the War Production Board, would have had large powers over materials and priorities which would have enabled it to manufacture "synthetic rubber from agricultural or forest products to satisfy military and civilian needs."<sup>1</sup> The President vetoed the Bill which would have grossly complicated a difficult situation by breaking up the co-ordination of control which was the basis of the production policy adopted by Congress. The President vetoed it, pointing out that to take the determination of the availability of supply from the Board and

"... to say that materials can be taken away from ships and guns and ammunition and can be put to the work of producing rubber so that some people might use it for automobiles for an idle hour of pleasure is to fly in the face of the realities of the present grave military situation, which threatens all the world and civilization itself."

Still, the most urgent need of the United Nations was for shipping and yet more shipping, and here the shipyards of the United States did marvels. The fame of Mr. Henry Kaiser waxed high among his countrymen for the originality of his methods and for the success that

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, August 7.

had crowned them. Entering the shipbuilding field as a novice, with remarkable experience in concrete but a confessed ignorance of ship construction, he

"wrought a revolution which first appalled the old shipbuilders and then set them to feats of emulation. He conceived a ship to be, not a building that must slowly be raised from its foundations, but a unit composed of a number of parts which could be manufactured simultaneously and then put together. He took the sub-assembly system . . . and glorified it."<sup>1</sup>

By July, 1942, he had built or taken over six shipyards on the Pacific coast which were engaged in about a third of the entire United States merchant shipbuilding programme. He had undertaken to build 679 Liberty ships of 10,500 tons, 58 tankers and 10 transports, and he hoped to improve on this assignment for 1942 and 1943. It was, therefore, with great interest that the American public learned in July that Mr. Kaiser was advocating the construction of large transport aircraft to save time in the movement of men and urgently required, but not too bulky, goods across the oceans and to present less surface to the U-boats. On August 7 Mr. Donald Nelson said that the War Production Board had approved the construction by Mr. Kaiser's firm of 500 flying boats of the 70-ton Mars type, with an initial order for 100 to be placed by the United States Navy. If Mr. Kaiser made a success of the first part of the programme and construction did not interfere with the Government's programme of fighting aircraft, the remaining 400 would be built.\*

On August 9 the newly formed office of War Information warned the public that "as a nation we are not yet ankle-deep in the war," and that in the field and in the workshops "we have done pretty well but not well enough." This announcement followed the discovery that there had been some necessary curtailments of war production owing to lack of certain resources in raw materials and of some semi-finished products. By a

<sup>1</sup> From an article by Robert Waithman published in the *News Chronicle* on July 16.

\* The Mars aeroplanes had a speed of over 300 m.p.h., a radius of over 3,000 miles at cruising speed and could each carry 150 men with their equipment.

curious paradox the speeding up of war production had, in some places, slowed it down. Finished war material had been produced so much more rapidly than anyone expected that some assembly plants had outrun their supplies of parts for the time, and some of the factories where parts were manufactured had exhausted temporarily their supplies of raw material.

"So now," wrote the New York correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* August 9), "it is necessary for war production agencies for a little while to deal first of all with the problem of developing new supplies of materials and of gathering in unneeded surpluses from wherever they may be and putting them to proper use. The problem is by no means insoluble. Indeed, there probably would have been no problem at all if anyone had imagined last year that by this time output of finished war goods would have attained the enormous volume it has."

In spite of these difficulties it was growing clear by mid-September that before long the United States would be pulling their full weight in the armies and the factories of the United Nations. On September 13 Mr. Nelson said that since Pearl Harbour American production had been multiplied by 350 per cent. President Roosevelt, in his quarterly Lend-Lease report of September 14, said that even so, the United States must be prepared nearly to double their existing output. Yet there were many indications that once preparation had been completed the full output would be reached much more rapidly than any of the Allies expected. Meanwhile, all that was possible was done to make up temporary shortages. Scrap iron and scrap steel, of which the country had a plethora in early 1941, were now being combed out from every corner of the country with the enthusiastic support of the public, and, in the words of the New York correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* September 24), "nothing is too big or too small to be brought to the junk piles, from paper-weights to asthmatic locomotives." The need was great; steel plants would have to reduce their output if several hundred thousand tons of scrap were not forthcoming by winter and the demands of the war machine were insatiable. But there was every indication that the drive would succeed. Practical suggestions were sure of support and one,

viz., that motorists should strip their cars of needless bumpers and mudguards, was taken up with alacrity in many States and promised to bring in over 100,000 tons of metal to the scrap collectors.

On August 11 primary elections were held in the States of Arkansas, Idaho, Nebraska, New York and Ohio. The results did not surprise professional politicians. Former isolationists were more often returned than not. Isolationism, however, had been so widespread before Pearl Harbour that the voters, who turned out in small numbers, could hardly be blamed for deciding to let bygones be bygones. It was generally held that the result of the election was of small importance and that only the election in November would show what the public thought of the Government's financial and economic policies and of their conduct of the war.

## 2 : BRAZIL GOES TO WAR

By July 30 ten Brazilian merchant ships had been sunk by Axis U-boats and popular indignation was rising in all the Brazilian cities. The Government prepared for eventualities by removing persons of German, Italian or Japanese origin or suspected of dangerously strong pro-Axis sympathies from the ports and by taking naval and military precautions. On August 11 it was announced in Washington that Brazil had agreed to establish a joint defence board with the United States in order to discuss measures for the defence of the western hemisphere. The board was headed by Major-General J. R. Ord of the United States Army. Six days later the Brazilian Government announced the sinking of three vessels all engaged in coastal traffic with a total displacement of about 11,500 tons. One, the *Baependy*, had troops on board, some of whom were drowned. Popular fury was intensified next day, August 18, by the news of two more sinkings, and the police had great difficulty in preventing the sacking of Axis premises by angry crowds. The Brazilian Govern-



PRESIDENT GETULIO VARGAS IN CONVERSATION WITH A FRIEND



ment called for calm, but they made no attempt to appease the Axis, and on the contrary made ready for war. The destruction of 670 lives, those of 169 officers and other ranks among them, within a few miles of the Brazilian coast was characterized in an official note published in Rio de Janeiro on the night of August 18 as :

"This cowardly attempt against ships of the merchant marine of a pacific nation far from the seat of war, which was launched with disregard for the highest principles of right and human feeling," and the note told the public "to be sure that these crimes will not go unpunished."

Next day the news reached Rio that one of the submarines which had attacked Brazilian ships had been sunk by United States and Brazilian aircraft in co-operation, and on August 20 a state of undeclared war existed between Brazil and the Reich and U-boats were being attacked by Brazilian light craft and aeroplanes. One more seems to have been destroyed out of seven "flushed" in Brazilian waters. As a reprisal for the sinking of a sixth Brazilian vessel within the week President Vargas seized a number of Germans and Italians who were about to leave the country to be exchanged at Lisbon for Brazilian subjects and held them as hostages. On August 21 he addressed a crowd of sailors who had assembled before his palace, and said:

"The sea is a symbol of liberty, and people who do not defend their seas are not fit to live. For this reason Brazil will defend her territorial waters and guard her coasts. The Brazilian Navy and Air Force in co-operation with the United States Navy and Air Force will give stronger protection to our seas, the better to prevent a repetition of the monstrous crimes of which we have been witnesses."

Late on Saturday, August 22, the Brazilian Government issued the following declaration of war : "In the face of acts of war against our sovereignty, we recognize that a state of war exists between Brazil and the aggressor nations, Germany and Italy. A diplomatic communication has been sent through the appropriate channels to these countries." The news was received with great satisfaction in the English-speaking countries. President Roosevelt, in a message to President Vargas, said that the action of Brazil had "hastened the coming of the



inevitable victory of freedom over oppression." Sir Noel Charles, our Ambassador to Brazil, in a communication made on behalf of his Government to Dr. Aranha, the Brazilian Foreign Minister, expressed the "deep satisfaction" of his Government at the decision taken by Brazil "in defence of Brazilian honour and national rights," and said that they were "greatly encouraged by the accession to the ranks of the defenders of liberty of so important and influential a nation."

The Portuguese reaction to the news was most interesting. Portugal was neutral; her position obliged her Government to abstain from all demonstrations of sympathy with the Allies. Nevertheless, blood proved thicker than water. The Portuguese had not forgotten that Brazil had been a Portuguese colony and that its people spoke the language of Camoens. President Carmona telegraphed to President Vargas emphasizing "the fraternal sentiments of the people of Portugal and myself, whose thoughts are with the noble Brazilian nation at this historic moment of her existence." On August 23 the Prime Minister, Dr. Salazar, and the Cabinet drew up a communication to the Brazilian Government in which after explaining that the position taken up by Portugal in the present conflict "never signified . . . the severing of historical links with other countries," they declared that they felt themselves all the more bound to Brazil by their ties of blood and concluded :

"Now that Brazil is at war the Government desire to express to her, in the name of the Portuguese people, the sentiments of fraternal esteem, moral solidarity, and sincere emotion with which they think of their brothers in the attitude of sacrifice they have assumed in defence of what they hold to be their honour and their right."

Outside Argentina troubled by fears that Brazil would receive such large supplies of weapons from the United States as to upset the balance of power in South America, the attitude of the Spanish American States was friendly. The Inter-American Defence Board meeting at Washington on August 24 to consider the Brazilian declaration of war unanimously adopted a resolution of "adherence and friendship" to the United

States of Brazil. Chile promised her collaboration and with Uruguay accorded Brazil non-belligerent rights.

The adhesion of Brazil to the United Nations gave them an ally possessing vast resources, and a geographical position of great strategic importance. With Brazil on their side the United Nations were in a position to control the western side of that "waist" of the Atlantic Ocean, which was coming to be called the Straits of Dakar. The Brazilian navy of two cruisers, ten destroyers, four submarines and several small craft was able to render useful service in these seas; the Air Force, although small, was being modernized and expanded under American auspices; the Army of over 400,000 first-line troops and trained reserves was partly mobilized already and was brought up to a war footing by a Presidential decree dated September 16. Aircraft and submarine chasers reached Brazil from the United States during September and several attacks, some of which were believed to have been successful, were made on Axis submarines. At the end of September Colonel Knox, Secretary of the U.S. Navy, reached Rio de Janeiro after visiting naval and air bases in Northern Brazil, of which he described Natal as among the best he had ever seen.

### 3 : SPANISH AMERICA

The Republics of Spanish South America adopted an interesting variety of political attitudes during the period under review. Portuguese-speaking Brazil made war upon the European members of the Axis. Spanish-speaking Mexico and the kindred Republics of Central America, French-negro Hayti and Spanish-settled Cuba and the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup> had also gone to war, Mexico and likewise Salvador and Panama against all three Axis States, the rest either against Japan or against Germany and Italy. In Spanish South America, Columbia and Venezuela had broken off all relations with the

<sup>1</sup> q.v. *The Ninth Quarter*, p 154.

three aggressor States ; several of the other republics, if nominally neutral, gave the United States such assistance and so many marks of practical sympathy that they could be described as pre-belligerents. Argentina, however, preferred to "gang her ain gait" in spite of the sympathies which large elements of her population manifested for the Allies. Chile, too, seemed to be shifting a leg to the Axis side of the fence. There was, therefore, a marked distinction between friendly neutrals and neutrals pure and simple.

Of the States in the first category Uruguay interned the crew of the German steamer *Tacoma* which had been seized in March in reprisal for the torpedoing of a Uruguayan ship. Another Uruguayan ship, the steamer *Maldonado* was torpedoed south of the Bermudas in August. The Government protested through Switzerland, but no reply had been received at the end of September. They also took measures to close the frontier against pro-Nazi Brazilians or Germans who might seek refuge from Brazilian pursuit and they discussed common measures of defence with Brazil and Paraguay. At Montevideo early in September the Committee for the Political Defence of the Continent, on which sat delegates of all the South American States, recommended the removal of Axis nationals from the coasts and neighbouring islands of the Continent and the close surveillance of all shipping. Several Germans and Japanese were removed from the Uruguayan coast and others were arrested for espionage.

On the opposite side of South America the Republic of Ecuador granted permission to the United States to occupy the Santa Elena Peninsula on its coasts and to establish a base in the Galapagos Islands. This concession greatly improved the protection of the approaches to the Pacific entrance of the Panama Canal. The British Government formally handed over the islet of Patos, near Trinidad, to the Venezuelan Government on September 29.

While all these States were chiefly restrained by their lack of armaments from taking more active measures against the Axis, the Argentine Government, under

President Castillo, adopted a somewhat critical attitude towards the United States. The Foreign Minister accepted the German assurance that the sinking of an Argentine vessel, the *Rio Tercero*, had been due to a mistake, but Congress was not satisfied. Speaking at the annual Army and Navy banquet on July 6 the President characterized those who did not share his views on neutrality as professional war-mongers and recommended those who wished to fight for democracy to leave Argentina and fight themselves at the fronts. Argentina did not formally accept the German "blockade" of the Atlantic coast of the United States but by agreeing to dock her ships in American ports in the Gulf of Mexico instead of ports on the eastern seaboard of the United States, she certainly seemed to be conforming to it. When the Chamber of Deputies met (July 15) many of its members were in a critical mood, and the Foreign Minister, Dr. Guinazu, failed to persuade them that his policy had safeguarded the rights and dignity of the Republic. In a "secret" session which followed Dr. Guinazu's replies to his critics, he was said to have spoken bitterly of the desire of the United States to "dominate" the whole Continent. However this may have been, it was certain that the Argentine Government were much annoyed by the refusal of the United States to sell them armaments. They were also jealous of the strength of United States' influence in Uruguay and of the Brazilians who, they feared, would become the strongest military nation in Latin America, thanks to the Lend-Lease aid which they themselves were refused.

Many Argentines believed that their Government's adherence to a policy of strict neutrality would end in their country's isolation, and this belief was strengthened by a commercial agreement between Brazil and the United States which was signed at Rio de Janeiro on August 1 and gave Brazil a favourable market for her products in the United States for four years. The Castillo Government showed themselves extremely sensitive to criticism. When Mr. Waldo Frank, a distinguished American lecturer and writer, addressed a letter to several

Argentine newspapers in which he contrasted the spirited devotion to principles of the founders of the Argentine Republic with the "wavering timidity" of their descendants, the Foreign Minister made it known that Mr. Frank was no longer a *persona grata*. It was unfortunate that next day, August 2, six men should have broken into Mr. Frank's flat and "beaten him up." The Argentine Chamber expressed their regret on behalf of the nation. Three weeks later members of the staff of a pro-German newspaper and other persons were reported to have been arrested in connexion with this affair. By this time Brazil had gone to war, to the scarcely veiled dismay of the Argentine Government who saw the balance of South American power changed by the inevitable growth of Brazilian strength.

Such were the high motives that kept the Argentine Government discontentedly yet voluntarily neutral. The majority in the Chamber opposed the Government's policy but they managed by their inept tactics to let the Senate, where there was a Government majority, and the ministerialists in the Lower House, outmanœuvre them, so that the Castillo Government were able to maintain the state of siege. Seeking commercial openings elsewhere than in the United States, the Government opened negotiations with Spain, and on September 5 an important barter agreement was signed at Buenos Aires which was to be a prelude to negotiations for a commercial treaty. Spain also agreed to build a warship for Argentina. But this success did not strengthen the position of the Government. A strike with resultant rioting at the capital, the continued escapes of members of the interned crew of the *Graf Spee*, attacks on interventionist newspapers culminating in the bombing of the offices of *La Prensa*, and a conflict between the two houses of Parliament and the judiciary added to their anxieties. Although they took some measures to placate the interventionists or, more probably, the American Government, such as the prohibition of the disclosure or publication of the movements of the ships of any belligerent, they did not strengthen their position. On September 29 the Chamber

of Deputies passed a resolution demanding the immediate rupture of diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan by the narrow majority of 67 votes to 64. However, as the session ended next night and Congress would not meet until the following May, intervention was no nearer, and the Government made it clear that they would ignore the vote. They were more worried by the movements of General Justo, a former President, who crossed the border and offered his sword to Brazil.

The Government of Chile took a somewhat similar line. They professed their readiness to strengthen the cause of the democracies, but they maintained diplomatic relations with the Axis, and the Legislature only sanctioned the President's visit to the United States when the Foreign Minister, Señor Barros, had assured it that President Rios would not conclude any agreements during his visit. Meanwhile, the presence of well-known Axis spies and agents in the Chilean capital and the ease wherewith letters and telegrams could be dispatched from both countries to Berlin, Rome and Vichy by way of Madrid, were arousing uneasiness in London and still more in Washington.

## CHAPTER VII

### AXIS HOME FRONTS

#### (A.) GERMANY

During the Quarter under review the German home front, in its various aspects, entered a clearly critical phase. The military situation was held to demand that the whole war-machine should be subjected to certain grave risks, which were undertaken recklessly, if not desperately. Though no major political event occurred at home, it was a breathless period from start to finish.

The great and critical gambler's throw was the adoption of the "Speer Plan," a realignment of war production based on the assumption that Russia could be counted out before the winter. Thousands of men were withdrawn from the factories to be sent to the Eastern Front, while foreign workers, though inadequate in both quality and quantity, were recruited to take their place. The factories themselves were to a large extent turned over from the production of the heavy armament appropriate to the Russian campaign, to that of the U-boats and quick-firing guns which would be required for settling matters in the West. In other words, German resources of manpower and materials were already assumed to be inadequate for a war on two fronts, and all attempt to provide for this contingency was abandoned.

To put the Speer Plan, desperate as it was, into operation required a considerable expenditure of energy; nor was the process allowed to go unhampered by the enemy. This was the period of gigantic British air-raids, and of the less spectacular, but equally effective, offensive sweeps by smaller groups of aircraft against the communications and production of Germany and Western Europe. It was noted how sensitive the attenuated economy of Germany was to the effects of air bombardment. Adjust-

ments which in Britain would be made from resources still only partially mobilized, in Germany made demands on the war machine itself. The ideal of total war, pursued to the uttermost, brings this result, that there is no margin in which to absorb an unexpected shock. The civilian evacuation of Cologne, for example, represented in itself a notable diminution of the German war effort, since the energies that were diverted to it had already been seriously engaged elsewhere. Every bombed-out household meant a call on the nation's diminished stocks of civilian goods which could be met only at the expense of mobilized war industry. Kitchen pots and pans, for example, were not available, even in reduced quantities, at the ironmonger's down the street ; it needed a slackening, slight but perceptible, of the national war effort to produce them.

Thus the arrangements for assistance to air-raid victims were of necessity crude and comfortless. The Rhineland towns put up great wooden barns, unprovided with the simplest furniture or sanitation, and death-traps in themselves, for the accommodation of the homeless ; when these were seen to be peculiarly liable to catch fire the equivalents in Berlin were not actually erected until needed, the timber being stacked in readiness. Such methods revealed little resource in dealing with a major problem of modern warfare, and their improvised and inadequate character bore witness to the general unpreparedness of Germany for fighting a long defensive war.

Throughout the Quarter, indeed, the note of improvisation and crisis was repeatedly sounded, in more spheres than one. The policy of postponing essential non-war work to the very limit of security, and sometimes beyond, was deliberately adopted. Railway trucks carried more than their safe load, while axles were greased less frequently ; the result was a series of alarming accidents. The number of doctors in civilian practice was severely cut down ; the result, according to a well-placed Swedish observer, was a marked decline in the people's health. Here and there, in the mighty fabric woven by Hitler's genius and resource, the elastic was beginning to snap.



The railways provided an example of how even "interior lines of communications" are not without their problems. As a result of the advance into Russia the German railways were operating 17,000 miles of extra lines of a wider gauge, while at home they were coping with the Speer Plan, the migration of industry from bombed areas, and the reduction in coastal shipping. It is not surprising that serious stoppages occurred, even apart from those caused by the locomotive-hunting of the R.A.F.

Economically, the spectre of inflation took a more menacing form. There was a scramble for shares, whose prices had to be controlled like those of food. Sales of land, that least uncertain of all investments, were forbidden altogether. The grip which National Socialist organization had on the national economy was thus shown to be less complete than some had thought.

The harvest, unlike that in Britain, proved to be a poor one, even though arms workers, who had been putting in ten or eleven hours a day in the factories, were encouraged to devote their scanty holidays to gathering the crops. Two S.S. men were given effective control of the Ministry of Agriculture—a grim portent for the farmers.

When so much was near breaking-point little attempt to disguise the essential brutality of the régime was to be expected. All pretence at legal decency was finally brushed aside on August 24 when the bandit Thierack, as the new Minister of "Justice," was given power to set aside all written law. The Nazi tyranny had become absolute.

But the moment had not arrived for the underground opposition to Hitlerism to declare itself. In fact, a strange simulacrum of unity was observed to invest the nation, though it was not particularly of a character to reassure the nation's rulers. The air-raids and the obvious exhaustion of the drive against Russia combined to give everyone the feeling, one neutral observer said, that the Fatherland was indeed in danger. The crest of the wave had been reached, and subconsciously the people were waiting for the inevitable subsidence. The "Second

Front" was the universal nightmare, as was shown by the varying methods used by the Propaganda Ministry to persuade people to defy or laugh at it. In the moral as well as the military sphere the Churchill-Stalin ruse had worked.

But, just because for the first time the Germans were seeing that at the end of their long vista of easy victories the real struggle was only now beginning, *morale* was, on the face of it, good, except for that nervous grumbling rudeness which Goebbels, in his humourless way, tried to reduce by a propaganda campaign.

It was about the future those who had their hand on the nation's pulse were not so sure. Kites were flown. On September 22 General Dietmar broadcast about the "fanatic moral strength" of the Russians ; on September 28 the *Frankfurter Zeitung* was beginning to write that it would be "a long and hard war." Hitler himself, introducing yet again that grim annual campaign of "Winter Help," laid emphasis on the "endurance" which the German people must now show if they were to survive. He promised Stalingrad, but "*la guerre fraîche et joyeuse*" had receded very far into an overcrowded, ugly background. The Waffen SS, its future rôle now revealed to the world through the discovery of a secret document in Libya, was sharpening its weapons.

## (B.) ITALY

Italy was in different case. To some extent she revealed the same symptoms of crisis as did Germany, and in heightened degrees ; but essentially her domestic problem was the popular conviction that she was fighting someone else's war. But, apart from this, her economic and moral structure, far weaker than Germany's, was already proving itself to be badly, perhaps mortally, affected by the normal stresses of war. The Government were losing their grip on price levels, and inflation, that dire fatality which in Germany's tighter economy might be held indefinitely in check, was already a serious reality south

of the Alps. There had been a 50 per cent rise even in controlled food, unrationed commodities had risen by 200 or 300 per cent, while on the flourishing black market the increase might be anything up to 1,000 per cent. Wages remained almost unchanged, and it was calculated that a respectable post office clerk would have to spend the whole of two months' salary if he wished to buy a new suit of clothes.

The corporative system was found utterly wanting in dealing with this old and inescapable problem of national bankruptcy. The Government decided to establish a system of savings which, after the war, were to be redeemed in kind on the basis of present prices. Many Italians were shrewd enough to see in this device a counsel of despair, as it committed the State to a grim war economy for years after the war was over, thus at one stroke depriving of its glamour that victory which was always said to be just around the corner.

Meanwhile, the moral rottenness of the Fascist régime was almost openly acknowledged. The serious food shortage in the big towns was admitted to be largely the result of official dishonesty and greed. Sixty thousand party members were removed in the middle of August ; but they were not those in high places, whose anti-social crimes were greatest.

The gibe had become painfully just that Italy, so fond of pointing to the "plutocrats" of Britain and America, was itself a country of "cratoplutes." That is to say, if in the United States a man could secure political power because he was rich, in Italy he could certainly grow rich if he had political power. "Selfishness, speculation and unscrupulousness everywhere" ran an official indictment published at the beginning of September, though it omitted to name the criminals at the top, who ran the black market and piled up great fortunes by graft. The party secretary, Farinacci, however, found it necessary to declare publicly that his wealth had been accumulated through his legal practice, and not through party office.

The whole of the Fascist organization, indeed, was passing through a critical phase which would have been

more closely remarked abroad if the war itself had not absorbed all attention. The successful nucleus of the party was still the Old Guard, resting upon reputations achieved in the largely imaginary civil war of 1920. These ageing men, still chanting "Giovinezza," were at once in a safer and a more hopeless position than Hitler's early Nazis. Since the dynamism of Italian Fascism was largely illusory, they had not attracted to themselves, nor were they challenged by, younger recruits whose motive was anything better than common mercenary ambition. Thus the *morale* of the Fascist Party had sunk very low indeed, and it was quite unequal to the rigours of warfare as waged on Hitler's "total" principles.

There was no reason at all why the economic enslavement of Italy to Germany should not continue to develop during the period. Industrial, as well as domestic, fuel grew scarcer and scarcer, and supplies from Germany dwindled. Italian industry withered away, except such as was deliberately retained by Germany for strategic reasons. Italian workers, like any Czechs or Poles, were haled off to Germany as a kind of helot army. The future rôle of Italy in Hitler's calculations was becoming all too clear. The suspicion grew that her de-industrialization, called by the Germans "rationalization," now forced upon her as a war-time measure, would still be imposed after an Axis victory.

Sabre-rattling propaganda was necessary to counter the frame of mind evoked by these considerations. "Greater Italy" was held out as the reward of victory—a Mediterranean and African empire, including all the old French possessions and the control of the Suez Canal. It was never explained how this would fit into Germany's plans, but meanwhile, during July, Mussolini was in Libya, hanging about ready for the triumphant Axis march into Alexandria. He could not, however, wait for ever, and before the Quarter had ended he had braved the journey back by way of Athens and the Acropolis.

Towards the end of the period, while Italy was still comparatively free from air attack and Rommel was at

the gates of Alexandria, the Rome Fascio was moved to announce that it would "proceed with draconic severity against all defeatist elements." "Defeatists" was a word that had not hitherto been much used publicly in Italy, but it represented an idea that was too painfully present in everyone's mind. Apparently the authorities were finding it best to refer openly to the possibility of defeat, so as to put across the difficult argument that the war in the Mediterranean was not now a Nazi war, but one fought that Italy herself might survive.

## CHAPTER VIII

### VICTIMS, ACCOMPLICES AND NEUTRALS

#### I : THE VICTIMS

The torture of Poland continued. Twenty-one Polish **Poland** soldiers were shot on July 6 on a charge of rough treatment of German fifth-column men in September, 1939. There were many other executions but these did not prevent Polish bands from harassing their tyrants to an extent that compelled the German colonists to form special corps of militia. Late in July a secret newspaper was discovered in Warsaw by the Germans. The staff of four, including a woman, fought it out with the Gestapo till all were killed. By the first of September 1,091 Poles had been executed in two months and the seizure of four-fifths of the harvest suggested that the Germans were preparing a famine for the winter. It became known in September that young Poles were being compulsorily recruited as craftsmen in enemy aircraft factories, for work on the German communications in Russia and other military purposes.

Persons merely suspected of complicity in or sympathy **Bohemia** with the killing of Heydrich continued to be shot from time to time by the Gestapo. There were also many executions for sabotage, publication of illegal newspapers, membership of banned patriotic societies and similar offences. On September 2 a bishop, two priests and an elder of the Prague Orthodox Church were executed for "hiding, aiding, and feeding the murderers of Heydrich." It became known by September 10 that fifty-four entire families, numbering 131 persons, had been executed since May 27. Three mothers fell beside their sons, six with their daughters.

In August General Ingr returned here from the Middle

East and Russia. He found that the Czechoslovak unit in Russia was now ready to take the field and was excellently armed and equipped. Notes exchanged between the British and the Czechoslovak Governments were published as a White Paper (Command 6,379, price 1d.) on August 5. In his Note Mr. Eden said, as the Prime Minister had said nearly two years previously, and as he himself repeated in Parliament on the day when the White Paper was published, the Munich agreement was a dead letter having been "deliberately destroyed" by the German Government, and that

"H.M. Government regard themselves as free from any engagements in this respect. At the final settlement of the Czechoslovak frontiers to be reached at the end of the war, they will not be influenced by any changes effected in and since 1938." The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, M. Jan Masaryk, in his reply recognized the British note as "a practical solution of the questions and difficulties of vital importance for Czechoslovakia which emerged between our two countries as the consequence of the Munich Agreement . . ." and "as a highly significant act of justice towards Czechoslovakia. . . . Between our two countries the Munich Agreement can be considered as dead."

It might have been formally killed earlier.

**Baltic  
States**

What little news reached the West through Sweden from the Baltic States gave the impression that the vast majority of their inhabitants were thoroughly unhappy under German rule. Most had objected, when deportation threatened objectors, to the Russian seizure of their countries but their hopes that the Germans would restore their liberties had been disappointed and they found themselves subjected to the oppressions, forced labour, ourfew, levies of food and goods, martial law and the suppression of all but Nazi newspapers and wireless, to which conquered peoples had to submit.

**Occupied  
Russia**

The appetites of the Germans had won them the name of "locusts" in Greece. In Russia they were equally greedy and destructive and their forces of occupation often behaved with shocking brutality, especially in the Cossack territories of the Don and Kuban. Documents

found on dead Germans, usually on N.C.O.s, frequently revealed a repulsive combination of sadism and exhibitionism, manifesting itself in a love of publicly flogging and otherwise tormenting women, children and old people, sometimes before killing them, and of writing these exploits in diaries. In recaptured villages an appreciable proportion of the inhabitants had died of hunger or had been executed, sometimes for aiding Russian partisan forces, sometimes apparently merely to strike terror into the survivors. In some such villages the losses amounted to a third of the population. There were also cases where an entire village was wiped out on charges of resistance to the Germans or of giving food and information to the ubiquitous partisans.

The internal situation in Yugoslavia was greatly complicated by quarrels between the Communists and General Mihailovitch. Much was known but little was said in London of these serious differences. It need only be said here that they arose primarily from two causes. When the Germans overran Yugoslavia the Communists passed the word to avoid offending the Germans but to work for a social revolution. This agitation took absurd forms as when students persuaded peasants owning four or five acres and three cows to confiscate the redundant property of *kulaks* owning ten acres and six cows. Bickering and bloodshed played the German game very nicely and in parts of the country constituted a serious obstacle to General Mihailovitch's movement. Then came the German attack on Russia. The Communists, as in Britain, discovered that this was a righteous war and under the leadership, it was believed, of M. Lebedev, an attaché whom the Soviet Government had left behind when they withdrew their Legation from Belgrade, they made many attacks on the invaders and their satellites. Unluckily they could not agree to take orders from General Mihailovitch, who had an army and a fair supply of equipment, nor could they even agree on any common scheme of attack. Mihailovitch complained that the sole results of the killing of unimportant Germans or



Italians by Communist partisans—whose courage none disputed—were the depopulation of towns and villages by massacres and deportation in reprisal for these useless if spirited gestures. He preferred to concentrate his forces for attack wherever severe blows could be inflicted on the enemy's outlying garrisons or communications but otherwise to keep his army or armies in being in the mountains where the Axis troops could not reach them. In the winter of 1941-42 Nationalists and Communists fought one another in Montenegro and elsewhere. Communists murdered General Mihailovitch's Chief of Staff; each side accused the other of understandings with the enemy and it was surprising that the resistance to the Axis was not completely hamstrung by these dissensions.

In the spring of 1942 the Yugoslav Government are said to have invited the intervention of the U.S.S.R. through M. Bogomolov, the Soviet Ambassador in London to the Allied Governments. The situation certainly showed some improvement in the summer, when patriotic movements of varying importance were afoot in Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia proper, and neither the Axis garrisons, nor their Magyar and Bulgar satellites, still less the quisling forces of Pavelitch in Croatia and General Neditch in Serbia were able to inflict any decisive defeat on the troops of General Michailovitch and the various partisan bands operating in loose collaboration with him in Croatia and Slovenia. Still it seemed that much of the Yugoslav effort was too dispersed to cause the enemy more than temporary anxiety and that political and regional feuds had not yet been composed.

Meanwhile the sufferings of the population increased. Those of the Slovenes were exceptionally cruel. By the beginning of August some 1,500 hostages had been shot, many by Italians, on a great variety of charges. The carrying off of 200 factory girls from the Kranj textile works for the use of German troops was a particularly blackguardly example of "Kultur." In August over 20,000 Slovenes who refused to become Italian citizens were deported, often handcuffed, to southern Italy. The

violence shown in Slovenia was attributed to the importance of the railway lines passing through the country. These formed the chief links between Italy to the south-west and the German factories and the Rumanian oil-fields to the north and east. Orders issued by General Roberti, Commander of the XIth Italian Army Corps which was stationed in Slovenia, suspended all local railway traffic and warned the public that persons who came within a kilometre (five-eighths of a mile) of a railway except in towns were liable to be shot as trespassers. There were obviously reasons for the enemy's fears of sabotage and it was significant that on August 31 Field-Marshal von List was relieved of his post of Commander-in-Chief in the Balkans. Air General von Löhner succeeded him and was promoted to the rank of Air Marshal. He visited Dr. Matchek, the interned Croat leader, in mid-September and sought to persuade him to collaborate with the Axis and to accept high office. Dr. Matchek refused, immediately after which sixty prominent members of the Croat Peasant Party were arrested in Zagreb and others in the country.

On July 19 the King of the Hellenes with M. Tsouderos **Greece** returned to England after an absence of four months in which they had visited Egypt, Palestine, Syria, the United States and Canada. In a statement to the Press on July 21 the Greek Prime Minister said that the food situation remained serious, although by arrangement with the British Government 15,000 tons of wheat a month would be brought from Canada in Swedish ships. In spite of Axis oppression Greek resistance continued. Bands held the mountains in Macedonia and Crete; elsewhere passive resistance was widespread. Ten ships had been added to the Greek Navy during the past year, four destroyers, four corvettes and two other ships.

Many Dutch citizens were seized as hostages during **Holland** the quarter by General Christiansen, the Commander of the Army of Occupation, and great numbers of Dutch Jews were transferred to Eastern Europe. After an attack

on a troop train near Rotterdam in mid-August five well-known hostages, among them Count van Limburg Stirum and Baron van der Oye, former President of the Dutch Olympic Committee, were shot.

Queen Wilhelmina opened her State visit to the United States on August 6 when she addressed Congress.

Speaking in the Senate to members of both Houses, the Queen was warmly cheered when she declared that "No surrender" was the motto of her people, and when she outlined the war and peace aims of the Netherlands. "We are with you and the other United Nations to the last," she said. "Our war aims are the recovery of lost territory, to join in the post-war economic planning, and the adoption of means to prevent future wars." The Netherlands, said Queen Wilhelmina, adhered to the Atlantic Charter and the Lend-Lease agreement with the United States, which pointed the way to wise international economic planning.

"We want to resume our place as an independent nation on the fringe of the Atlantic and on the dividing line between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans (she continued) and to remain your good neighbour in the Caribbean Sea; and we accept the responsibilities resulting from this situation." She praised Congress as a democratic assembly which serves as a guarantee that liberty is for ever young, strong, and invincible; whereas the autocrat is incapable of rejuvenating himself and is every day nearer his end, and his regime is doomed to die with him.

This was the first occasion on which a woman monarch had addressed Congress, and the Queen received a tremendous ovation.

Later, at the Navy Yard, President Roosevelt told Queen Wilhelmina that, as a tangible expression of American admiration for the Netherlands Navy, he handed over to her, under the provisions of the Lend-Lease Act, a submarine-chaser named *Queen Wilhelmina*.<sup>1</sup>

The Queen returned to London on August 26 after a visit to Canada and her unexpected appearance at the Albert Hall where the Dutch colony were celebrating her birthday, aroused immense enthusiasm. Two new Ministers, Jonkheer O. C. van Lidth de Jeude (War) and M. J. van den Brock (Finance) joined the Dutch Government in London.

**Belgium** The Belgians celebrated their national fête day in July with appropriate ceremony. Resistance to German brutality continued and it was as marked among the Catholics as among the Socialists. In August Cardinal van Roey, Primate of Belgium, and the Belgian bishops protested against the enforcement of compulsory labour for miners on Sundays and Church holidays.

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*. Washington dispatch published August 7.



GENERAL DRAZHA MIHAILOVITCH



They said that if Germany desired "to preserve contacts with Belgium after the war, those contacts must not be made impossible in advance by measures which deeply offend the masses of the people." To this General von Falkenhausen replied that since the Axis was engaged in a struggle against Bolshevism, which was of the highest interest to civilized peoples, especially Catholics, it was important that Belgian Catholics should do their utmost to contribute to the destruction of 'a contemptible and atheistic regime.' He suggested that the Cardinal would do well to dispense certain categories of workers from the obligation of attending Mass on Sundays; he denied that deportation measures existed. "We only deport by force troublesome elements who do not merit more severe punishment." He concluded: "For the rest, I warmly thank your Eminence for the concern you have been good enough to express for the interests which I represent. Allow me to state, however, in conclusion, that when peace has been concluded with a victorious Germany the peoples will be happy and proud to preserve contact with our country. We have no anxiety on that subject, and, in any case, if any nations should show themselves recalcitrant in collaboration with the new order they would simply be eliminated, and would disappear from the face of the new Europe."<sup>1</sup>

The struggle between Quisling and the Norwegian Church continued but threats and cajoleries alike failed to induce the clergy and laity of Norway to accept the bishops whom he sought to impose upon them. On August 14 Quisling's Church Department announced that no further enthronements of bishops were contemplated, and this announcement was interpreted as a sign of the temporary defeat of the pro-Germans. Other signs of the national hatred of the regime were the letters of resignation by Trade Unionists which overwhelmed the quislingized Trade Union Headquarters at Oslo in mid-September. In most letters the writer attributed his resignation to the decision of the hand-picked Trade Union leaders, whom Quisling had won over, to send representatives to the *Riksthing*, the Nasjonal Sammlung's so-called Parliament. This party's rally was interrupted on September 25 by the incursion of four British Mosquito bombers (q.v. Chapter II, Section 2) and it was remarked that Quisling's two speeches were markedly subdued in tone. King Haakon's 70th birthday was celebrated on August 3 with affectionate loyalty by the Norwegian colony in Britain, and Norwegian patriots leading the struggle at home contrived to send a message

<sup>1</sup> This characteristically German missive was published by *The Times* on September 3.

of greeting to their King. "He has shown us the road," the message said, "an uncompromising fight for our free and just Norwegian society." King George VI, President Roosevelt and the heads of other Allied States sent messages of encouragement and good-will. Many persons were arrested in Oslo for wearing flowers which the Germans and quislings supposed to signify their political sympathies. The majority of the arrested Norwegian teachers were released on August 8 through the intervention of the German military and allowed to resume work without declaring their loyalty to the regime. This did not, however, lead to any greater leniency on the part of the administration. Prominent citizens, including Dr. Nansen's son and daughter, were imprisoned ; from time to time the Germans shot persons on charges of sabotage or attacks on German or quisling police ; and the treatment of those confined in the concentration camps in Arctic Norway grew steadily worse.

**Denmark** On August 23 the Admiralty announced that fourteen Danish fishing vessels found in prohibited waters in spite of an Admiralty warning had been confiscated. On September 2 the Prime Minister, Hr. Buhl, significantly warned the Danish nation against sabotage of German army property. The Danish Conservative leader, Hr. O. B. Kraft, afterwards accused the Danish Nazi Party of instigating sabotage in the hope of thus persuading the Germans to establish a National Socialist administration in Denmark. King Christian's birthday was celebrated at home and abroad on September 26.

## 2 : FRANCE ON THE RACK

The return of Pierre Laval to office was soon followed, as was to be expected, by the putting into effect of a double programme : (1) Complete collaboration with Hitler's "new order" ; and (2) the *Gleichschaltung* of France. In so far as it had any independence at all,

Laval's policy was based on hopes of a German military victory. For himself he sought dictatorial power, exploiting for attaining it the veneration in which Marshal Pétain, "Victor of Verdun," was still held by important sections of the French people. The German overlords were less interested in Laval's professions and pretensions than in his performance.

Pressure to secure the delivery of 150,000 French workers to Germany grew. The bargain, if such it could be called, required the sending of skilled men to war factories against the release of a certain—not an equivalent—number of the 1,200,000 prisoners held by the enemy. Actually, the ratio was one prisoner for three workers. The Germans had made it plain that they wanted highly skilled workers, technicians, and specialists, not "butchers, bakers, barbers or unskilled workers." The importance of the matter will be better judged if it is borne in mind that 150,000 skilled workmen from France would set 1,000,000 unskilled and semi-skilled men and women to work in Germany—a serious reinforcement of the war machine at a time when German man-power was feeling the strain and drain of the unending casualties in Russia, and German industrial power was being increasingly disorganized by the crescendo of British air-raids. Laval served his masters well. His appeals to French labour combined flattery with threats of force. On August 11 he addressed 1,000 prisoners on their way back from Germany and workmen on their way to Germany. He spoke, significantly, at Compiègne :

"These prisoners who are coming home" [Laval said] "are the vanguard of the exchange which is beginning. Fraternity—which is often nothing but a fine word—has here become a moving reality. How I wish I could give some words of hope to all those who remain in prison camps. There are still 1,200,000 of them, and France is waiting for them with natural and legitimate impatience."

In the same speech Laval reaffirmed that the hour of French liberation was the hour when Germany won the war. He also talked of the task entrusted to him, and said :

"Others dragged you into war. I want to give you another destiny—to ensure the salvation of France, so that she may again show her true face



to the world. The road we must follow is a long one. We shall meet with obstacles ; to overcome them it will suffice always to draw our inspiration from the example given by the great soldier who presides over the destinies of our country."

French labour resisted both blandishment and bullying. The number of workmen recruited fell nobly short of the German demand.

The same effective passive resistance could not, unfortunately, prevail against German persecution of the Jews in France. From the usual personal indignities and restrictions of anti-Semitism the invaders passed to open terrorism of the kind which had made the German name stink in Poland and elsewhere. Mass deportations began, and the old pitiful scenes of forcible separation of husbands and wives, children and parents, were re-enacted in many towns. An eye-witness gave this picture :

Recently, relatives of men who had been seized were notified that they would be able to see them at a place near the Gare del'Est. What they saw was a band of men, manacled, fastened two by two, their feet hobbled, their heads shaved, to whom they were allowed to speak or to give a morsel of food. The victims were quickly marched off, bundled into a train, and disappeared—to "somewhere in the East." (*The Times*, August 8.)

Already early in August there had been more than three hundred confirmed suicides among Jews. The deportations ran to many thousands. As news of the latest wave of German frightfulness leaked out, there were expressions of horror in the outside world. In France itself similar horror was felt and, with great bravery, publicly expressed. Cardinal Gerlier, Archbishop of Lyons, protested. So, too, did the Apostolic Nuncio in Vichy. Sympathy was widespread. Many well-to-do Catholic families offered succour, and Catholic priests gave sanctuary, to the persecuted. The Military Governor of Lyons was dismissed because he refused to take part in mass arrests.

Laval made still clearer his dictatorial ambitions and his hatred of political democracy when late in August he abolished the offices of President of the Senate and President of the Chamber of Deputies (nominally held by M. Jeanneney and M. Herriot respectively). Both branches of Parliament had been indefinitely prorogued

in July, 1940, and their powers had expired on June 1, 1942. Laval stated his intentions explicitly. Addressing a conference in Paris, he said :

"I myself deliberately killed the old parliamentary regime in July, 1940, and I tore up its last vestiges when I suppressed the offices of the Senate and Chamber by the decree of August 25, 1942. No sane person could dream that I should ever go back on that, by consenting to the resuscitation of parliamentary government."

MM. Jeanneney and Herriot addressed a solemn and nobly worded protest to Marshal Pétain.

Liberty cannot die in the country of its birth (they wrote). The great and imminent danger is that liberty cannot be won back without convulsions which it is your duty to avoid.

Within a few days Laval had the stout-hearted M. Herriot put under house arrest. M. Herriot was asked to give his word of honour in writing that he would not try to leave France. His reply was characteristic. "You insult me," he said. "You can tell your masters that I am not obliged to give any pledges. I have only one thought—to serve France. How, does not concern you."

A challenge from a different quarter was revealed when Benoist-Méchin, one of Laval's Secretaries of State, was dismissed. "I shall not tolerate that the authority of the Government is attacked," Laval announced. The details of the quarrel were obscure, but Benoist-Méchin was a friend of Doriot, and Doriot was busily working for his own ends. There were feuds within the Vichy regime, and equally bitter feuds within the ranks of the Fascists, renegades and adventurers who found safe harbourage and patronage in Paris.

France showed that she was to be neither coerced nor cajoled. *Le Quatorze Juillet* was commemorated in both the occupied and the unoccupied zones. In Paris at such places as the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Bastille, crowds sang the Marseillaise. Leaflets with a message from Mr. Eden were dropped by the R.A.F. and passed from hand to hand. Speaking on behalf of the British people, Mr. Eden said:

"I address you not only as friends but as allies, for in the two years which have passed since the events at Bordeaux you have proved yourselves faith-

ful allies by continuing the struggle against the common enemy. To-day we celebrate July 14 in the hope and certainty that her liberation from the tyrannies of the present will be accomplished. On the day of that liberation we know that we and the people of France will again be brothers in arms.

German firing squads carried on their grim work in a vain attempt to stop sabotage and attacks on the troops of occupation. One of many cases may be recorded. On August 10 it was announced that ninety-three persons had been executed "as reprisals for attacks on Germans in different parts of France." The announcement was signed by the S.S. general in the office of the German Command in France. Ten days before units of the Waffen S.S., fresh from campaigning in Russia and equipped with armoured cars and the latest weapons, had marched down the Champs-Élysées.

Outside France, General de Gaulle's movement continued the struggle. A change of name from *La France Libre* to *La France Combattante* was warmly and widely welcomed as expressing the fighting spirit of the movement which, not without political difficulties, the General had inspired and led with such high ardour. Some interesting recruits reached London from France, among them M. André Philip, a Socialist and Deputy for Lyons; Captain Charles Vallin, a Deputy for Paris and Vice-President of the French Social Party (P.S.F.), the Right-Wing organization formerly known as the Croix de Feu; M. Pierre Brossolette, former Foreign Editor of the Socialist newspaper, *La Populaire*; and M. Félix Gouin, Deputy for the Bouches du Rhône, Vice-President of the Socialist Parliamentary Group in the Chamber of Deputies, and one of the lawyers who defended M. Blum at the Riom trial. M. Philip joined the French National Committee as Commissioner for the Interior and Labour. Some not well-informed questions were asked in Parliament about Captain Vallin, in view of his political antecedents. Actually, he fought with distinction in the Battle of France, and General de Gaulle, who had already made use of his services in organizing resistance inside France, now entrusted him with a mission to Lake Chad.

American relations with Vichy France moved steadily

towards breaking-point. Admiral Leahy, who had done such useful work as Ambassador, returned to Washington, and it was soon made clear that he would not go back to Vichy. When British forces landed in Madagascar the State Department expressed full approval of the action. American naval and military consultants were appointed to the French National Committee. These and other indications pointed clearly to a coming crisis between Washington and Vichy.

### 3 : SOME ACCOMPLICES

The Finnish forces maintained a purely defensive **Finland** attitude on their front during the quarter and there was no evidence that Hitler's promises of territorial cessions at the expense of the Soviet Union aroused any particular excitement among the Finns or that his promises of deliveries of food to them had materialized. In spite of the annoyance of their German allies the Finns clung to their life-line of diplomatic relations with the United States, although an American request that the Finns should close their consulates in the U.S.A. strained these relations further. There were signs that official elements in Finland hoped that the American Government would somehow extricate them from the war. A broadcast from the Government-controlled station at Helsinki on July 24 pointed to this conclusion, and on September 19 M. Procope, the Finnish Minister in Washington, issued a statement that Finland wished to cease fighting as soon as the threat to her existence had been averted and guarantees had been obtained for her lasting security. Mr. Cordell Hull on the following day informed the Press that the subject was "under review" and under review it remained for the rest of September.

The relations between Hungary and Rumania did **Hungary and Rumania** not improve ; indeed, it was quite clear in August that had it not been for the presence and overlordship of the

German hosts the two vassal nations would have been at one another's throats. Transylvania was the bone of contention. The bulk of it had gone (in spite of the non-Magyar extraction of the majority of its inhabitants) to Hungary under the Vienna award of August, 1940. The most pro-German Rumanians felt its forced cession bitterly. They were the more indignant since while the Rumanian Army had played an important part in the Russian campaign and had suffered at least 300,000 casualties, the bulk of the Hungarian Army remained at home garrisoning the newly acquired territories and not more than four divisions had appeared by July on the Russian front.

The Magyar squirearchy who had something like a monopoly of political power in Hungary had done well on the whole in 1940-1941. German economic demands had been less exacting than those made of the Rumanian Government. The Magyar landlords were back in ceded Transylvania and in the Batchka region of Yugoslavia. Beyond some anti-Jewish legislation they had not felt themselves obliged to imitate the Germans. They preserved the forms of Parliamentary Government and the Press was less completely muzzled than in Germany and Italy. But before the quarter was completed Magyar complacency had received several shocks and it was becoming clear that the terms of the "partnership" between Hungary and the Italo-German combination might yet be radically revised.

On August 20 a painful impression was caused by the news that Stephan Horthy, the son of the Regent of Hungary, had been killed in an air fight on the Russian front. He had recently been appointed Deputy Regent by his father. Less than a fortnight later Count Karolyi, Admiral Horthy's son-in-law, who was expected to become his successor-designate, fell a victim to what the Germans called an "unaccountable" accident while flying over the Danube with a sergeant-instructor. His machine plunged into the river and neither aeroplane nor passengers were seen again. Russian air raids on Budapest added to the despondency caused by these tragedies and

this despondency was intensified by indications that the Germans were preparing a "bad quarter of an hour" for their vassal and might even order the return of part of Transylvania to Rumania.

Bulgarian troops occupied much of southern and **Bulgaria** eastern Yugoslavia, but did not play an active part in the operations against General Mihailovitch. Bulgarian treatment of the Greek population of Western Thrace and the adjoining parts of Greek Macedonia was oppression, and in Thrace it extended to the Turks. In spite of attempts to Bulgarize the Skoplje region in Yugoslav Macedonia there were disturbances there in late August and an unsuccessful attempt was made to kill the Bulgarian Minister of Interior who was visiting the city. There were also many cases of sabotage in Bulgaria. Neither cruel anti-Jewish measures adopted by the Government nor executions of so-called Communists persuaded the Germans that they were "pulling their weight" in the Axis. So the Gestapo in Sofia was reinforced, a measure which did not prevent popular restiveness and could not calm the apprehensions of the Government who were disturbed by the bombing of Plevna, Stara-Zagora and Rustchuk by aeroplanes "of unknown origin," and were beginning to doubt the ability of the Germans to win a decisive success in Russia.

There was no news of moment from Slovakia during the three months and the affairs of the misbegotten little "kingdom" of Croatia have been treated in the preceding section of this chapter.

In "Greater East Asia" the luckless people of Thailand **Thailand** must have regretted their Anglophile dynasty which had been reduced to impotence by men who, not content with surrendering tamely to Japan, had joined in her aggression on Burma. Japanese pressure on the Thai Government increased. The Government imposed a strict control on foodstuffs, and in August announced that violation of the regulations empowering the authorities to search buildings and ships for food hoards would be dealt with by military

courts. Early in August the official "Radio Bangkok" said that the Government were contemplating the introduction of forced labour which "had worked so well in Germany." They had previously issued a decree whereby new M.P.s could only sit after they had been "approved by the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly." But even the quislings jibbed on occasion. On July 31 Bangkok Radio complained that Japan was the only foreign country from which Thailand could obtain goods but—"the Japanese have no time to manufacture goods for Thailand." On August 9 the same W/T Station urged the Thai people not to quarrel with Japan but to be broadminded. If both peoples "show a spirit of give and take no quarrels need occur." Which suggested that the Japanese were taking much more than they gave.

#### 4: SOME NEUTRALS

##### Sweden

Much irritation was caused in Sweden by shipping losses, the work of submarines, in the Baltic. Protests to Moscow elicited only denials, although the Swedes said that fragments of torpedoes found bore Russian lettering. A Swedish ship on the international Red Cross service was destroyed with almost all her crew by Italian bombers near Cyprus. On the night of July 23-24 two aeroplanes dropped bombs near the Swedish royal summer palace near Borgholm, on Oeland Island. Russian lettering on the fragments caused further representations to Moscow, but these had no effect.

To the great annoyance of the German Press the Swedish Press paid a unanimous tribute to King Haakon on his seventieth birthday, and in September some sarcastic references to the possibility that prominent Nazis might one day appear on neutral frontiers as refugees provoked much displeasure at Berlin. The general elections to the municipal and provincial councils resulted in marked Agrarian gains in the provinces and a moderate increase

of Communist representation (50 against a previous 34 in a total of about 1530 seats) which provoked the Nazi Press to inveigh against "Bolshevist infiltration." The fact that the small Independent Socialist party which professed sympathy with the Nazis lost the only two seats it held probably explained German wrath.

The shrinkage of the Swiss herds compelled the Federal <sup>Switzer-</sup>land authorities to inaugurate a fortnight of vegetarian diet on July 7. After this fast meat was strictly rationed. The dearth of metal supplies and the scarcity of coal and electric power<sup>1</sup> had a serious effect on industry. In August much annoyance was caused by the refusal of the Vichy Government to give transit visas to nine Swiss journalists who had been invited to visit Britain. The laws against espionage were strengthened, and on September 27 the first death sentences in modern Swiss history were pronounced against two N.C.O.s who had communicated information to a foreign power.

The chief political event during the quarter was the <sup>Spain</sup> dismissal by General Franco of Señor Suñer, the pro-Axis Foreign Minister, and of General Varela, the Monarchist (Traditionalist) Minister of War. Colonel Galarza, Minister of Interior, was another victim of the change, and General Franco displaced Señor Suñer from his chairmanship of the executive committee (Junta) of the Falangist Party. Señor Luna, vice-secretary-general of the Falange, had also to go. Señor Suñer's place as Foreign Minister was taken by General Jordana, a former High Commissioner in Spanish Morocco. General Asensio, Chief of the Staff, became Minister of War, and Señor Blas Perez de Gonzalez became Minister of Interior. General Franco himself took over the Presidency of the political Junta of the Falangist party and appointed Señor M. M. Figueroa in Señor Luna's stead.

These sweeping changes which were made public on the night of September 3 followed a long period of in-

<sup>1</sup> Persistent drought emptied the reservoirs and reduced the supply of hydro-electric power.



creasing friction between the Monarchist groups and the Falangists, which culminated in an alleged attempt on the life of General Varela while he left Mass at Bilbao after a special commemoration service. About seventy persons were injured by a bomb on that occasion, but it was not certain whether the Falangists had aimed at General Varela or sought the lives of Traditionalists (the most militant Monarchist group) without distinction. General Franco, who had appealed vainly for concord at Vigo on August 20 and was perturbed by the increasing friction between the Army and the Falange, decided to meet this troubled situation which threatened to end in civil strife by assuming the chief command of the Falange himself and by appointing more moderate men to take the Ministries of War and Marine. The importance of the change was internal. There was no justification for regarding it as a reverse for the Axis. An official statement issued on September 21, after a series of Cabinet meetings, said that the foreign policy of Spain would be consistent with "the spirit of our crusade, i.e. the civil war, with the anti-Communist sense of our movement and with *the necessities of the new European order*,<sup>1</sup> and our close friendship with Portugal and our historic solidarity with the Spanish-American countries." At the same time it was obvious that neither the Government nor the people of Spain wished to be involved in the war, whatever their sympathies might be. A successful conversion operation involving nearly 4,500,000,000 pesetas of 3 per cent Treasury Bonds issued in 1939 appeared to indicate an increase of confidence in the national credit.

On July 17 General Franco had announced the impending formation of a new Cortes to prepare and elaborate laws which would be ratified by the Head of the State. The new Legislature would be composed partly of *ex-officio* members, partly of representatives of the syndicates and professions, and partly of his own nominees. The law for the formation of the Cortes was proclaimed amid the acclamations of the Press, but no further action followed during the period under review.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are the writer's.

The Portuguese Navy saved the lives of many British **Portugal** subjects whose ships had been sunk by U-boats in the Atlantic and British and Allied citizens exchanged from Japan met with every consideration in Portuguese Africa. Attacks on Portuguese fishing craft by Axis submarines in September caused much indignation. Reference has already been made to Portuguese sympathy with Brazil (Chapter VI, Section 2).

On July 8 Dr. Refik Saydam, Prime Minister of Turkey, **Turkey** died suddenly. On the following day M. Sarajoglu, the tried and trusted Foreign Minister, took Dr. Saydam's place at the helm. The Turks were much relieved by the check administered to Rommel's Army at El Alamein, but the advance of the Germans towards the Caucasus, fears that the Black Sea would become a German lake, the activities of Axis propagandists and signs that Germany might incite Bulgaria against Turkey, prevented any public or official complacency. On August 5 M. Sarajoglu, in a statement to the Grand National Assembly, explained that his Government would follow the same foreign policy as its predecessor and would maintain both the alliance with Great Britain and the Turco-German Pact. But he took care to explain that Turkish neutrality would be "active" not "passive," a phrase which was interpreted as a mark of Turkish concern for the independence of the Balkan countries. Loud acclamations greeted his warning that "if in spite of our careful attention, our independence and our territory were attacked, our whole existence would be devoted to one ideal—to fight to the last man."

He obtained a unanimous vote of confidence.

In September a Turkish Press Delegation, all journalists of high character and experience and good friends of Great Britain, visited England with good results. There was a further impressive expansion of Anglo-Turkish trade during the quarter. Turco-Russian relations, which had deteriorated through no fault of the Turks since the Russo-German Pact of 1939, engaged the serious attention of the Prime Minister and the new

Foreign Minister, M. Numan Menemenjoglu, and early in August M. Jevad Achikalin, an able diplomatist who was marked for the post of general secretary of the Foreign Office, was appointed Ambassador to Russia. Throughout the quarter the Middle Eastern neutrals, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, led peaceful days.

NOTE.—The affairs of the South American neutrals are dealt with in Chapter VI, Section 3.

# CHAPTER IX

## KING, MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT

### I : THE KING

The nation and Empire shared with the Royal Family the grief which came to them through the death on August 25 of the Duke of Kent, youngest of the King's brothers. While serving with the Royal Air Force, in which he held the rank of Air Commodore, the Duke was killed on active service. As Chief Welfare Officer of the R.A.F. Home Command he was attached to the staff of the Inspector-General of the R.A.F., and in the course of his duties he set off on August 25 from Scotland in a Sunderland flying-boat for Iceland. In bad weather the aircraft crashed on a hill-side within half an hour of taking off. The Duke of Kent and thirteen of those accompanying him, including members of his personal staff, were all killed. The sole survivor was Flight Sergeant Jack, the rear gunner, who was seriously injured. Among the dead were the Duke's private secretary, Lieutenant John Lowther, R.N.V.R., grandson and heir of Lord Ullswater ; Pilot Officer the Hon. Michael Strutt, son of Lord Belper and brother of the Duchess of Norfolk ; and Leading Aircraftman Hales, the Duke's valet.

The Duke of Kent, who was aged thirty-nine, had shown personal qualities and diligence in the public service and had won for himself the widest esteem. In 1934 he married Princess Marina of Greece, and only three weeks before his death he had been present at the christening by the Archbishop of Canterbury of their second son and third child. The infant Prince was named Michael George Franklin. The King, President Roosevelt (for whom the Duke was proxy), the King of Norway, the Queen of the Netherlands and the Crown

Princess of Greece were among his godparents. The Duke's death so soon after this happy event deepened the general sympathy with the bereaved Duchess and her young children. After having served for some years in the Royal Navy the Duke left the sea in 1929 because of indifferent health. He then devoted himself to public work and served successively in the Foreign Office and the Home Office. He was the first member of the Royal Family to be a civil servant. In 1938 he was appointed Governor-General of Australia, but the appointment was not to take effect till November, 1939, and the outbreak of war prevented the Duke from taking up an office in which he had been assured in advance of a cordial welcome from the Commonwealth. In 1940 he undertook an important goodwill mission to Portugal. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941—being already a qualified pilot—and only a few weeks before his death he had completed a year's work in the course of which he had flown 50,000 miles and inspected over two hundred R.A.F. establishments. Soon after joining the Air Force the Duke crossed the Atlantic in a bomber—the first member of the Royal Family to do so—to see the progress of the training of pilots and air crews under the Commonwealth Air Training Scheme in Canada,<sup>1</sup> and to visit President Roosevelt.

The Duke's body was taken to Dunrobin Castle, seat of the Duke of Sutherland, and afterwards to Windsor Castle for burial. The funeral took place in St. George's Chapel on August 29. The King and Queen, the Duchess of Kent, Queen Mary and other members of the Royal Family were present; as were the heads of six of the United Nations—the King of Norway, the King of the Hellenes, the Queen of the Netherlands, King Peter of Yugoslavia, the President of Poland and the President of the Czechoslovak Republic. Six Air Marshals and Air Vice-M Marshals acted as pall-bearers and the coffin was borne by eight non-commissioned officers from fighter squadrons of the Royal Air Force. Garter King of Arms proclaimed the dead Duke's style and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Eighth Quarter*, p. 207.

titles and the "Last Post" and "Reveille" were sounded by trumpeters of the Royal Air Force.

When Parliament reassembled on September 8, after the summer recess, addresses to the King and resolutions of condolence with the Duchess of Kent were passed by both Houses. Each Address expressed the sorrow felt at the loss sustained by the King and the Royal Family through the death of a Prince, who (in the words of the Commons Address) "was regarded with universal affection and esteem by His Majesty's subjects." In moving the Address in the Commons the Prime Minister said :

"The loss of this gallant and handsome Prince, in the prime of his life, has been a shock and sorrow to the people of the British Empire, standing out lamentably even in these hard days of war. . . . The Duke of Kent had a joyous union and a happy family. . . . All our thoughts go out in sympathy to the Duchess of Kent, the beautiful and stricken Princess who, in her turn, tastes the bitter tribulation which war brings to so many. That she may make a home for herself and her children here in the hearts of the British nation is the fervent wish of the House of Commons and of all those for whom the House of Commons has the right to speak."

Mr. Greenwood and Sir Percy Harris supported this tribute to the Duke and those who died with him. After passing the Address the House nominated four members—Miss Lloyd George, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Hugh O'Neill—to convey personally a message of sympathy to the Duchess of Kent. In the Lords the Address was moved by Lord Cranborne, Secretary of State for the Colonies and Leader of the House, with whom the Duke had discussed certain aspects of his mission to Iceland on the day on which he set out on his last journey. The peers nominated the Duke of Norfolk and the Duke of Devonshire to convey their message of condolence to the Duchess of Kent. To each House there was later reported a reply to these messages from the Duchess of Kent in which she said that it was a source of great pride and comfort to her to know that the Duke had died "as he himself would have wished, for his King and country." The two Houses of Parliament in Australia also passed resolutions expressing profound sympathy with the Royal Family.

In September the King visited the scene of the accident in which his brother was killed and talked with the farmer and other members of the search party who found the smouldering remains of the wrecked aircraft. The findings of a court of inquiry set up by the Air Ministry to investigate the cause of the accident were subsequently reported to the House of Commons by Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary of State for Air. The report showed that about half an hour after taking off from an R.A.F. station in Scotland the aircraft was heard approaching land from the sea at what appeared to be a low height and shortly afterwards was heard to crash into the hills. The court found that the accident occurred because the aircraft was flown on a track other than that indicated in the flight plan given to the pilot and at too low an altitude to clear the rising ground on the track ; and that "the responsibility for this serious mistake in airmanship lies with the captain of the aircraft." The captain of the aircraft was described as a flying-boat pilot of long experience on the particular type of aircraft which he was flying.

Among many other engagements the King and Queen in July made a war tour of North Wales and the Midlands, in the course of which they visited war factories. At the end of September the King also visited Portsmouth, on the day before Admiral Sir William James struck his flag as Commander-in-Chief there, and he took luncheon with the Admiral in H.M.S. *Victory*. In the early days of August the Duke of Gloucester returned to England after an absence of four months on a war tour of the Middle East. On this journey he travelled some 42,000 miles, mostly by air, and visited troops in a hundred military centres. From Egypt he went to India, and his itinerary also included Palestine, Cyprus, Syria, Iraq, Persia, Aden, Eritrea, Somaliland, Kenya, the Sudan, British West Africa and Gibraltar. The King appointed Thursday, September 3, the third anniversary of the outbreak of war, as a national day of prayer and dedication, and on that day he attended divine service, accompanied by the Queen and the Duke and Duchess of

Gloucester. The Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet attended the service held in Westminster Abbey.

## 2 : MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT

After the House of Commons had so decisively rejected on July 22 the motion of "no confidence" in the central direction of the war the Government ran into smoother waters in their relations with Parliament. The hostile motion had been a symptom of the bitter disappointment felt in Parliament and the country at the defeat which had resulted in the expulsion of the Eighth Army from Libya by Rommel's forces and the loss of the fortress of Tobruk. This mood soon passed. By mid-July General Auchinleck had stemmed the enemy advance to the Nile. With powerful reinforcements at hand the Desert Army was stabilized on a short and strong defensive line. There came a reaction in Parliament against any further harassing of the Prime Minister and the Government at a time when our military fortunes in the Middle East were at a low ebb and events soon showed that vigorous steps were being taken to retrieve our position there. The strong criticisms in the House of Commons may well have been an additional spur to action. The House had expressed the view that something was wrong with the direction, handling and equipment of the Eighth Army. It was later shown that some of these assumptions were right.

Within a month of the House of Commons division the Prime Minister arrived in Cairo. This was the first stage of another memorable journey which took him later to Moscow for the discussions with Premier Stalin. At Cairo Mr. Churchill engaged in a series of military conferences in the course of which the whole war situation in the Middle Eastern theatre of operations was surveyed. As is recorded elsewhere, General Smuts and Sir Archibald Wavell took part in these conferences, and one result of the decisions taken was seen in a drastic reorganization of the High Command. On his return



journey from Moscow Mr. Churchill spent another week in Egypt and on each occasion he visited the troops at the front and talked to the rank and file as well as to the commanders and junior officers. Reports afterwards sent home by war correspondents testified to the electrifying effect of Mr. Churchill's visit upon the Desert Army.

In a speech in which he made a report of his mission to the House of Commons, Mr. Churchill gave his impressions of the Eighth Army in the following passages :

"Before I left I had some reason to believe that the condition of the Desert Army and the troops in Egypt was not entirely satisfactory. The Eighth Army . . . had lost over 80,000 men. It had been driven back about 400 miles since May, with immense losses in munitions, supplies and transport. . . . In the battles around Gazala, in the stress of the retreat and the fighting at El Alamein, where General Auchinleck succeeded in stabilizing the front, the structure of the Army had become much deranged. . . . Nevertheless, as I can myself testify, there was a universal conviction in officers and men of every rank that they could beat the Germans man to man and face to face. But this was coupled with a sense of being baffled and of not understanding why so many misfortunes had fallen upon the Army. The spirit of the troops was admirable, and it was clear to me that drastic changes were required in the High Command and that the Army must have a new start under new leaders. . . . I took pains while I was there to visit and inspect almost every large formation, not only those at the front, but others which were preparing in the rear. I spent five days in this way and was most kindly received by the troops, to whom I explained the extraordinary importance and significance of their task and its bearing upon the issues of the whole war. . . . I have never seen an army which deserved victory more, and I await with confident hope the further unfolding of the scroll of fate."

Mr. Churchill's visit to Moscow and his meeting with Premier Stalin also gave great satisfaction in Parliament and the country. It had long been hoped that he might be able to make such a visit. The first official news of the journey was not made known until Mr. Churchill had left Moscow. By that time he had been absent from England for about three weeks. He left London about the beginning of August, accompanied by Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and after spending some time in Egypt he arrived in Moscow on August 12. He made the whole journey by air, in a Liberator bomber ; and he told the House of Commons how that part of the journey from Cairo to Moscow was

made in two long flights with a break at Teheran, where he met the Shah of Persia. On the journey and mission to Moscow the Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr. Averell Harriman, President Roosevelt's personal representative. After the discussions at the Kremlin Mr. Churchill left Moscow on August 16 and he got back to England again on August 24. The return flight from Cairo to England, on which a stop was made at Gibraltar, took rather less than twenty-seven hours. Most of his colleagues in the War Cabinet were present at the railway station to greet him on his return to London, and his safe accomplishment of an exacting mission that was not without personal hazard was welcomed by the whole country.

When Parliament reassembled on September 8, after the summer recess, Mr. Churchill gave the House of Commons an account of the mission in the speech previously referred to. He did so in the course of a general review of the war situation at that date in which he also gave further information about the naval and air action fought in getting a big convoy through to Malta ; the Dieppe raid; and the progress of the war against Japan in the south-western Pacific. In this speech he also disclosed some news hitherto kept secret about the visit to London in July of an important American mission. This mission comprised General Marshall, Admiral King and Mr. Harry Hopkins.

"These gentlemen," said the Prime Minister, "met in numerous conferences not only the British Chiefs of Staff, but the members of the War Cabinet and of the Defence Committee. . . . During a period of ten days or more the whole field of the war was explored and every problem of importance in it was scrutinized and weighed. Decisions of importance were taken affecting the whole future general conduct of our operations not only in Europe but throughout the world. These decisions were in accordance with the wishes of President Roosevelt and they achieved his final approval. Thus, by the end of July complete agreement on war policy and war plans had been reached between Great Britain and the United States. This agreement covers the whole field of the war in every part of the world and also deals with the necessary productive and administrative measures which are required to enforce the combined policy and strategy which has been agreed upon."

He was already "armed with this body of agreement between Great Britain and the United States," said Mr.

Churchill, when he went to Moscow. Important as were the conferences in Cairo and the visits to the Eighth Army, he emphasized that the main purpose of his journey was to visit Premier Stalin. He told how he and Mr. Averell Harriman spent four days in conferences with M. Stalin, sitting sometimes for five or six hours at a time. At the same time the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and General Wavell—who had also joined Mr. Churchill in Moscow—were discussing “the more technical aspect of our joint affairs” with Marshals Voroshilov and Shaposhnikov. At his conferences with Stalin, said Mr. Churchill, everything was gone into with the utmost candour and thoroughness. He admitted that the Russians did not think that we or the Americans had done enough so far to take the weight off them. This he did not think surprising in view of the terrific onslaught upon Russia, which she was enduring with such marvellous tenacity.

“No one in the last war,” he continued, “would have deemed it possible that Russia could have stood up as she has been doing to the whole weight of the Teutonic armies. I say the whole weight because, although there are 40 to 45 German divisions facing us in the West and holding down the subjugated countries, these numbers are more than made up against Russia by Finnish, Hungarian, Rumanian and Italian troops who have been dragged by Hitler into the frightful welter. It is a proof of the increased strength which Premier Stalin has given to Russia that this prodigious feat of the resistance of Russia alone to the equivalent of the whole Teutonic Army has been accomplished for so long and with so great a measure of success.

“It is difficult to make the Russians comprehend all the problems of the sea and of the ocean. We are sea animals and the United States are to a large extent ocean animals. The Russians are land animals. Happily, we are all three air animals. It is difficult to explain fully all the characteristics of the war effort of various countries, but I am sure that we made their leaders feel confidence in our loyal and sincere resolve to come to their aid as quickly as possible and in the most effective manner, without regard to the losses or sacrifices involved so long as the contribution was towards victory.”

Mr. Churchill was confident that in spite of the barriers of language he had “succeeded to a considerable extent” in achieving the main object of his visit, which he described as having been to establish with Premier Stalin the same relations of easy confidence and of perfect openness which he had built up with President Roosevelt. He

went on to give a vivid sketch of his impressions of the Russian leader and to hint at the frankness of their discussions.

"It is very fortunate," he said, "for Russia in her agony to have this great rugged war chief at her head. He is a man of massive, outstanding personality, suited to the sombre and stormy times in which his life has been cast; a man of inexhaustible courage and will-power and a man direct and even blunt in speech, which, having been brought up in the House of Commons, I do not mind at all, especially when I have something to say of my own. Above all, he is a man with that saving sense of humour which is of high importance to all men and all nations, but particularly to great men and great nations. Stalin also left upon me the impression of a deep, cool wisdom and a complete absence of illusions of any kind. I believe that we made him feel that we were good and faithful comrades in this war—but that, after all, is a matter which deeds, not words, will prove."

One thing which impressed the Prime Minister deeply on this visit was what he described as "the inexorable, inflexible resolve of Soviet Russia to fight Hitlerism to the end, until it is finally beaten down." Premier Stalin told him that while the Russians were naturally a peaceful people, the atrocious cruelties inflicted upon them by the Germans had roused them to such a fury of indignation that they had been transformed. Mr. Churchill's reflection on the long return flight to Cairo was that "in the British Empire, the United States and the Soviet Union, Hitler had forged an alliance of partnership strong enough to beat him to the ground and steadfast enough to persevere, not only until his wickedness has been punished but until some at least of the ruin he has wrought has been repaired." Of the fighting on the Russian front Mr. Churchill spoke only in one significant sentence: "I will only at this moment say that it is the eighth of September!"

Of the war at sea Mr. Churchill said that the losses from submarine attack were still heavy, but June and July had shown a definite improvement on the preceding months. This was due largely to the continued development of the convoy system off the American coast. It had also been effected in spite of heavy losses in war operations, such as the Russian and Malta convoys. At the same time he was able to give the House the news

that "the line of new building of merchant ships of the United Nations has definitely crossed and maintained itself on the graph above the line of sinkings." Warfare on U-boats had been more successful than at any former period in the war and very few days had passed without one or more being sunk or damaged by our own or Allied ships. Even then he could not say that the sinking of U-boats had nearly kept pace with the believed and planned German new construction. Our heavy and successful bombing of German ship-building yards would have an increasing effect upon the future output and assembly of U-boats, and the part played by aircraft in countering U-boats grew more important every week. The struggle at sea he described as the foundation of all the efforts of the United Nations. If we lost that all else would be denied to us. But there was no reason to suppose that we had not the means of victory in our hands. In concluding this speech the Prime Minister associated the Government and the House with "the solemn words which were used lately by the President of the United States, namely, that those who are guilty of the Nazi crimes will have to stand up before tribunals in every land where their atrocities have been committed in order that an indelible warning may be given to future ages. . . ."

This debate led to an incident which achieved more prominence than it merited. The Government had assumed that the House of Commons, returning to Westminster after a recess, would wish to discuss the Prime Minister's statement on the war situation at some length. Two days were allotted for the purpose. But the House showed itself to be disinclined on this occasion to indulge in a long debate on the war. There was general satisfaction at the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. It was evident from what the House had been told of the military conferences at Cairo, from the subsequent changes in the High Command, and from Mr. Churchill's personal testimony that everything possible was being done to reinforce, re-equip and give new leadership to the Eighth Army. In addition to that the Eighth Army in the previous week had given proof

of its new quality in the heavy fighting in which a major offensive launched by Rommel had been heavily repulsed. For these reasons the House showed no desire for a debate, and only two speakers followed Mr. Churchill before the first day's proceedings came to an end for lack of argument. Some members had also left the Chamber before the Prime Minister finished his speech. To some this may have seemed discourteous on such an occasion, but the House of Commons has its own conventions in such matters and no discourtesy was intended. Most of the members concerned had other Parliamentary business which required their attendance in a committee room a little later and they did not find it convenient to wait until Mr. Churchill had finished. They left after they had heard what they thought must be the most important part of his speech.

Sir Stafford Cripps, the Leader of the House, was annoyed to find that members showed such little enthusiasm for a debate on the war after the Government had altered the programme of business to provide facilities for a debate of two days, and he was moved to make some sharp comments. He referred to the fact that members had left during the Prime Minister's speech and expressed surprise that more had not wished to comment on this review of the war situation. The House, he said, could not conduct its proceedings with the dignity and weight expected of such an assembly unless members were prepared to pay greater attention to their duties in the House, which were "just as great as the duties of men in the trenches at the front." These observations by Sir Stafford Cripps achieved great publicity. The Lord Privy Seal's rebuke was much resented in the House. It was thought surprising that members should be chidden for not having engaged in a debate on the war situation when there was no spontaneous desire to do so. Most of their supporters thought that the Government might have been content with the fact that the House had found the Prime Minister's speech so acceptable. An attempt was made to revive the debate on the following day—when a Vote of Credit for war expenditure was the princi-

pal topic under discussion—but all that resulted was a few speeches by the more persistent critics of the Government, including some personal abuse of Mr. Churchill.

The further Vote of Credit for war expenditure, introduced by Sir Kingsley Wood, increased the total of such Votes from the beginning of the war to £11,050,000,000. War expenditure was now averaging £12,250,000 a day, as compared with £8,000,000 a day two years before. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House that Government expenditure on goods and services now absorbed 54 per cent of the national resources, as compared with 44 per cent in 1940-41; while we were financing 45 per cent of our Budget expenditure by taxation as against only 35 per cent of the lower Budget expenditure of 1940-41. He estimated that in 1942 taxation would take as much as 40 per cent of the national income. This Vote came before the House a few days after the completion of the third year of war and the Chancellor said that in those three years the war had cost us £10,000,000,000. Adding the cost of the National Debt and of our normal peace-time services the total expenditure in the three years was £12,100,000,000. Of this vast sum 40 per cent had been met out of taxation. The taxation policy he described as having been much more drastic than that of the last war; but he took the view that apart from the consideration that the greater the taxation the less the borrowing, taxation had been of inestimable benefit in counteracting inflationary tendencies. He also mentioned that since the beginning of the war £4,200,000,000 had been contributed to its cost by the lending of savings.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer also referred to the probability of a beneficial extension of the lend-lease principle to help in meeting financial and economic problems of the post-war world. The Chancellor said that by a single stroke of policy on the part of President Roosevelt in establishing the lend-lease principle the whole of war finance between the United Nations had been placed on a new basis. We had followed America's example by furnishing military supplies to Russia and

China without question of payments and the lend-lease transactions between ourselves and the United States were no longer flowing one way. In Britain and Australia supplies and services were being made available to American troops on the basis of reciprocal aid ; outside this country the American Forces received what they needed in our Colonies ; and our shipping was at their disposal. In this principle of mutual aid the Chancellor thought we should find the indispensable condition of an improved system of economic and monetary intercourse between countries which would be invaluable in facing the problems of the post-war world.

"We are not ready," Sir Kingsley Wood added, "to make public all thoughts in our minds about this, especially because we went to discuss our ideas frankly and fully with our friends and Allies without any prior commitments to hard and fast plans. But we have been by no means idle and we are making good progress in our consideration of these matters. We are determined that no one shall be able to say that the difficult and dangerous problems of the post-war world will find us unprepared on the economic and financial side."

The unfortunate political developments in India attracted much attention in Parliament. On July 30 Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, made a statement in the Commons in which he issued the plain warning to the Congress Party which is summarized in the last chapter of this volume.

This warning passed unheeded. The All-India Committee of the Congress Party adopted the Working Committee's resolution, and the Government of India made a swift reply to the challenge by arresting the Congress Party leaders. Mr. Amery, in a broadcast to India, said that the success of such a mass civil disobedience campaign as the Congress had proposed would have paralysed not only the ordinary civil administration of India but her whole war effort. No worse stab in the back could be administered to the Indian, British, American and Chinese soldiers now defending India and preparing to strike at the enemy from their Indian base. He claimed that the Government of India's swift preventive action before the campaign could gather momentum had saved India and the Allied cause from a



grave disaster. The decision had the support of all but insignificant elements in the House of Commons. The Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress a few days later issued a statement in which it was stated that "the action of the Government of India in detaining leaders of Congress was a timely and unavoidable precaution." The attempt to organize a civil disobedience movement was described in this statement as certain to injure seriously the hope of Indian freedom and to give encouragement and comfort to the common enemy. An appeal was made to the Indian communities to realize that the war was also India's battle as much as that of the other Allies. The statement also urged the Government to make it clear that on the abandonment of civil disobedience free and friendly discussions would be resumed on the methods of implementing the promise of Indian self-government.

There followed a period during which disorders and sabotage in India were successfully suppressed. The next important event was a statement on India by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on September 10. In this statement Mr. Churchill used language which Labour members and some others thought unduly aggressive and which led to some controversy. Conservative members almost unanimously applauded the statement. The Prime Minister told the House that the course of events in India had been improving and was on the whole reassuring. The substance of the remainder of his statement was as follows :

The broad principles of the Government declaration which formed the basis of the Cripps mission to India represents the settled policy of the British Crown and Parliament. These principles stand in their full scope and integrity. The good offices of the Lord Privy Seal were rejected by the Congress Party—but the Congress Party does not represent the majority of the people of India or even the Hindu masses. It is a political organization built around a party machine and sustained by certain manufacturing and financial interests. Outside the Congress Party and fundamentally opposed to it are the 90,000,000 Moslems of British India, 50,000,000 of the Depressed Classes, and 95,000,000 subjects of the Princes of India ; these three large groups alone represent 235,000,000 out of a total population of 390,000,000 in all India. Large elements among the Hindus, Sikhs and Christians in British India also deplore the present policy of the Congress Party. The Congress Party has now abandoned in many respects

the policy of non-violence which Mr. Gandhi has inculcated in theory and has come into the open as a revolutionary movement, designed to paralyse the communications by rail and telegraph and generally to promote disorder, the looting of shops and sporadic attacks upon the Indian police, accompanied from time to time by revolting atrocities, thus hampering the defence of India against the Japanese invader. It may well be that these activities by the Congress Party have been aided by Japanese fifth-column work on a widely extended scale and with special direction to strategic points. It is noteworthy that the communications of the Indian forces defending Bengal on the Assam frontier have been specially attacked.

In these circumstances the Viceroy and Government of India, with the unanimous support of the Viceroy's Council—the great majority of whom are Indians—have felt it necessary to proclaim and suppress the central and provincial organs of this association which has become committed to hostile and criminal courses. Mr. Gandhi and other principal leaders have been interned under conditions of the highest comfort and consideration and will be kept out of harm's way till the troubles subside. It is fortunate that the Congress Party has no influence whatever with the martial races, on whom the defence of India, apart from British Forces, largely depends. Many of these races are divided by unbridgeable religious gulfs from the Hindu Congress and would never consent to be ruled by them. Nor shall they ever be, against their will, so subjugated. There is no compulsory service in India, but upwards of 1,000,000 Indians have volunteered to serve the cause of the United Nations, and during the past two months, when the Congress has been measuring its strength against the Government of India, more than 140,000 new volunteers have come forward, thus surpassing all records for recruiting. So far the Congress Party has proved impotent either to seduce or even sway the Indian Army, to draw from their duty the enormous body of Indian officials, or still less to stir the vast Indian masses.

India is a continent more populous than Europe and divided by racial and religious differences far deeper than any that have separated Europeans. The whole administration of India is carried on by Indians; there are less than 600 British members of the Indian Civil Service. In five Provinces, including two of the greatest and comprising 110,000,000 people, Provincial Ministers responsible to their Legislatures stand at their posts. In many places the population has rallied to the support of the civil power. Acts of pillage and arson are being repressed and punished with incredibly small loss of life. Less than 500 persons have been killed over this mighty area of territory and population, and it has only been necessary to move a few brigades of British troops here and there in support of the civil power. The outstanding fact which has so far emerged from the violent action of the Congress Party has been their non-representative character and their powerlessness to throw into confusion the normal peaceful life of India. It is the intention of His Majesty's Government to give all necessary support to the Viceroy and his Executive in the firm but tempered measures by which they are protecting the life of the Indian community and leaving the British and Indian Armies free to defend the soil of India against the Japanese. Large reinforcements have reached India and the numbers of white soldiers there are larger than at any time in the British connection. I therefore feel entitled to report that the situation in India at this moment gives no occasion for undue despondency or alarm.

This statement by the Prime Minister became the subject of a short debate on a motion for the adjournment

in the House of Commons the next day. The matter was raised by Mr. Arthur Greenwood on behalf of the Labour Party. He had no complaint to make of the action taken by the Government of India—since his party had already approved that action—but he argued that the tone of the Prime Minister's statement was unhelpful, that it was "couched in language that was not calculated to improve Anglo-Indian relations," and that it would have an unfortunate effect in India. Mr. Ammon, the other principal Labour speaker, took the same view. He referred to the statement as being a "truculent, swash-buckling, 'damn-your-eyes' sort of thing which took us back to the debates on the old India Bill." Both he and Mr. Greenwood urged the Government not to do anything unnecessarily to embitter relations with India and to give every encouragement possible to any constructive proposals from India which would help towards securing for that country the complete self-government promised at the earliest possible date. Other Labour members expressed themselves in more extreme terms. Conservative supporters of the Government firmly supported both the substance and the form of the Prime Minister's statement. Some of them had tabled a motion to give formal approvement by the House to the statement as it stood and had the rules of the House made it possible they would have been eager to go to a division on such a motion. The Government evidently preferred that the House should not divide on such a question as the handling of Indian affairs at a critical moment, and it was just as well that such a division was avoided.

Sir Stafford Cripps did not speak in this debate, but he made an interesting intervention at one point which threw new light on the breakdown of the negotiations which he had conducted with the Indian political leaders earlier in April. A Labour member asked who was responsible for the breakdown of the negotiations, and said that the whole truth had not yet been told. Sir Stafford Cripps provided the answer. "The change took place," he said, "on the intervention of Mr. Gandhi.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> But cf. Mr. Rajagopalachari's denial in Chapter XIII.

The Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution to accept the proposals. Mr. Gandhi intervened and subsequently that resolution was reversed." In replying to the debate, Mr. Amery described Gandhi as "the arch-saboteur," and he strongly contested the argument that the Prime Minister's statement had been provocative. Was it to be expected, he asked, that at a moment when the Allied cause in India and throughout the Middle East had been saved from peril by the successfully firm attitude of the Government of India, the Prime Minister would exchange that ringing, confident note which had so often sustained the House in dark hours for a muffled apology in a minor key? Soon after Sir Stafford Cripps had left India, he said, it became clear that under Mr. Gandhi's inspiration Congress was moving towards a policy of direct defiance, aimed at the paralysis of the existing Government of India. In a statement in his own journal, *Harijan*, on June 28, Mr. Gandhi wrote in support of a Congress instruction to the Indian people to resist compensated requisitioning of boats and vehicles :

"No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable, and inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly."

When widespread disturbances followed the arrest of the Congress leaders a serious feature was the concentration of efforts at sabotage in the vital strategic area exposed to Japanese attack. Mr. Amery agreed that the political problems of India could not be solved merely by standing pat and enforcing law and order, and he ended on an optimistic note. He pointed out that there were elements of unity in India and he expressed the hope that in the not too distant future Indians might be able to agree among themselves upon a constitution which would enable their country, in accordance with the policy to which we were committed, to take its place as a freely associated member of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In the House of Lords on July 30 there was a debate on a motion by Lord Craigmyle which raised the question of what protection, if any, was to be afforded to British

commercial interests in India under the constitutional settlement proposed in the draft declaration put before Indian leaders by Sir Stafford Cripps. With strong support from many other peers, he urged that any constitutional settlement should give reasonable protection to the valuable British commercial interests which had been developed in India, and had conferred great benefits on that country. The Duke of Devonshire, replying for the Government, gave an assurance that they were by no means indifferent to the future of British commercial and trading interests in India. He could, however, only repeat a statement made in reply to a question in the Commons the same day by Mr. Amery, viz. :

that His Majesty's Government had made it clear in connection with the recent offer that a guarantee of special protection for British commercial interests in India would not be a condition for the acceptance of whatever constitution Indians might involve after the war ; and that any such provisions would more appropriately be a matter for negotiation with the future Government of India.

In response to pressure from the House of Commons the Government reviewed the rates of Service pay and allowances and decided to make further increases which would cost an additional sum of £43,000,000 a year. This decision and its details were announced by Sir Stafford Cripps in a debate on September 10.

According to the information then given to the House increases of pay and allowances previously given since the war started represented an aggregate additional expenditure of £100,000,000 a year. In addition to that the post-war credits of men in the Services already stood at £35,000,000, and 427,000 families of Service men were receiving £13,000,000 a year in the war service grants awarded to those experiencing special financial hardship. The Government recognized, however, that a case had been made out for some further improvement in the financial position of Service men and their families. Sir Stafford Cripps explained that the Government had reconsidered the whole problem "in the light of existing price levels and with a view to arriving at a final solution of the matter so long as those price levels remain substantially the same." He added that both the Service and other Ministers were unanimously of the opinion that with the further increases, amounting in the aggregate to £43,000,000 a year, substantial justice would be done to all ranks in the three Services, and that the rates of pay should be stabilized so long as the price level remained unchanged.

The £43,000,000 was distributed in such a way that the greater part of the money went to the "other ranks" in the three Services and particu-

larly to married men with children. The men received an increase in their basic pay of 3/6 a week, which increased the minimum weekly cash payment received by any man in the Forces from 17/6 to 21/-. This applied to all privates, non-commissioned officers and warrant officers in the Army and to other equivalent ranks in the other Services. Women in the Auxiliary Services received two-thirds of this increase. For married men there were increases in the allowances for children. The weekly allowance for the first child was increased from 8/6 to 9/6, for the second child from 6/6 to 8/6, and for the third and each subsequent child from 5/- to 7/6. These increases in basic pay and children's allowances were estimated to cost £37,500,000 a year. The balance of £5,500,000 went to improve the financial position of married junior officers. The allowances for children of all officers up to the rank of captain in the Army—and the equivalent ranks in the other Services—were increased by 1/- a day. For a wife and one child the allowance was thus increased to 7/-, for a wife and two children to 8/6, and for a wife and three children to 9/6 a day. Certain modifications were also made in the allowances paid to married officers to mitigate disadvantages to those separated from their families. Unmarried junior officers benefited by the shortening to six months of the period between promotion from second lieutenant to lieutenant in the Army and from pilot officer to flying officer in the Air Force. Since it was not possible for Service reasons to resort to this method for the Navy the pay of acting sub-lieutenants was increased from 7/8 to 9/- a day and that of sub-lieutenants from 9/- to 11/- a day.

These increases failed to satisfy the House. Many Service members attended the debate and both they and other members took a very critical line. The general complaint was that the proposed increases were too small, and that all sorts of anomalies remained unaltered. Members of all parties pressed the Government to go further. A few weeks before the debate the Government had produced a White Paper on Service pay and allowances. In the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this was designed "to remove certain misapprehensions." The Government felt that in some of the not-very-well-informed comparisons made between the earnings of men in the Services and those in industry insufficient account was taken of all that the Service man received in kind, i.e., in food, clothes, accommodation and allowances for his family.

This paper set out to show what was estimated to be the real value of all that the Service man received in cash and kind. It was estimated that the single man's receipts in kind were worth 35/- a week and that the net value of the similar receipts of a married man was 23/- a week. This led on to the calculation that the single soldier, with his pay at the existing rate of 17/6 a week, was as well off as a single civilian with a wage of £3 a week liable to income-tax; that a married Service man with a wife and no

children received for himself and his wife emoluments equal to £3/4/- a week if the income were that of a married civilian liable to income-tax ; and that after three years' service the married private with two children would receive for himself and his family cash and other emoluments equivalent to earnings of £4/9/3 a week. It was pointed out that these were based on the minimum pay of soldiers and that there were all sorts of opportunities for increasing the basic rates through promotion and earning tradesmen's rates of pay. The paper went on to suggest that officers were much better off than was generally supposed because they pay income-tax only on that part of their emoluments which rank as pay and not on their allowances. On this basis the calculation was made that the net value of the pay and allowances of a second lieutenant were equal in value to a gross income of £462 subject to tax ; that the equivalent figure for a married lieutenant living at home and drawing all pay and allowances in cash was £483 ; or if he had two children, £518. The income of a bachelor second lieutenant living away from home was said to be worth a gross income of £578 a year, subject to tax ; and the corresponding figure for a second lieutenant with two children was put at £611 a year.

The White Paper had a bad reception in the Services and it excited bitter comment during the House of Commons debate. It was attacked on the ground that it was in many ways misleading, that it contained errors of fact, and that in general it gave a false impression of the financial position of junior officers and other ranks of the Services. One of the milder things said about it by a Service member in the debate was that if published in the United States it would probably qualify for the award of a well-known literary prize for the year's best work of fiction. Not for a long time had any Government White Paper aroused so much resentment. A special grievance which was the subject of much criticism was that soldiers' families in receipt of war service grants to supplement their allowances were to receive little or no benefit from the increase in children's allowances. While the increase in the Service man's basic pay was not taken into account in the assessment of war service grants, any increase in the family income of more than 2/- a week arising from increased children's allowances, would be taken into account, and the Government spokesmen admitted that the war service grants would probably be reduced by this amount. To this extent it meant that what the Government were giving with one hand they were taking away with the other. In spite of the volume of criticism in a very long debate the Government would make no further

concessions. Later, however, a deputation of Service members was received by Sir Stafford Cripps and Sir John Anderson and these Ministers undertook that the Government would give special consideration to some of the anomalies to which attention had been drawn.

A temporary rift in the Parliamentary Labour Party on an issue of domestic policy led to a division in the House of Commons on July 29, in which sixty-three members voted against the Government. This was the biggest vote against the Government since its formation. The trouble arose about old age and widows' pensions. As an interim measure, pending the publication of a report by Sir William Beveridge and an inter-departmental committee on the social services generally, the Government decided to give some small increases to these pensioners. No increase was made in the basic rate of pension, but it was decided to increase by 2/6 a week the scale rate for supplementary pensions paid to those who can prove need, with an increase of 1/- in the rate for each child below sixteen. With this were linked some smaller ancillary improvements in winter allowances and special grants to pensioners, and the total additional cost to the State was some £11,000,000 a year. The scale rates for unemployment assistance were increased by the same amount as the rates for supplementary pensions. These increased rates for supplementary pensioners were bitterly criticized by the Labour Party on the ground that they were insufficient to meet the needs of old people and widows as aggravated by war conditions and the latest Budgetary increases in indirect taxation. When the regulations to give effect to the increases were submitted to the House of Commons on July 29, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence moved an amendment, tabled officially by the Labour Party, to the effect that "in the absence of any specific assurance of further measures to be introduced in the next Session," the regulations could not be accepted as an adequate step towards meeting the difficulties of old age pensioners and widows. Mr. Pethick-Lawrence explained that while these proposals were put forward as a stop-gap measure, there had been no definite promise



by the Government to submit further legislation when the Beveridge Report had been received and considered. It was to elicit such a promise that the amendment had been put forward, and he undertook to withdraw it if satisfactory assurances were given by the Government.

When Mr. Bevin replied to the debate for the Government he defended the proposals as "a reasonable percentage advance to tide over the immediate difficulties" of pensioners, and promised that the Government would in the next Session give further consideration to the financial position of old age pensioners and widows. This assurance satisfied Mr. Greenwood, the leader of the Labour Party, and he asked leave to withdraw the Labour amendment. But Mr. Shinwell and a substantial body of Labour back-benchers were not satisfied with the assurance, and they refused to allow their leader to take the action which he proposed. In these circumstances the amendment could not be withdrawn and the House proceeded to a division. Mr. Greenwood was placed in the embarrassing position of having to vote with the Government against his own rebellious followers and against the amendment which had been tabled in his name. The amendment was rejected by 223 votes to 63. Of the 63 who voted against the Government 49 were Labour members. Mr. Greenwood and 56 other Labour members, including 18 Ministers, voted with the Government. There was some bad feeling in the Labour Party at the time about this incident, but the domestic squabble did not last long and proved to have no serious political consequences. At a private meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party the Labour M.P.s reaffirmed their confidence in the leadership of Mr. Greenwood by the decisive vote of 66 to 4. It was also laid down that in any such circumstances as arose in the pensions debate it must be left to the leader of the Party to decide the immediate course of action. No disciplinary measures were taken against the Labour members who had voted against the Government, and harmony was restored.

There was another important debate in the Commons on July 14 and 15 on war production. This debate,

coming soon after the defeat in Libya, was marked by lively criticism of our supply arrangements—particularly in the matter of tank and gun production—but Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, Minister of Production, and Sir Andrew Duncan, Minister of Supply, were able to satisfy the House that great strides were being made and that the worst of our production troubles were probably over. Mr. Lyttelton had been in the United States recently and he gave the House more information about the Combined Resources and Production Board, set up to weld the war production of Britain and the United States into a single integrated programme and relate it to the strategic requirements of the war. He expressed the view that while America was still ahead of us in simplification of design and the substitution of materials, we had nothing to be ashamed about and that in many things our production was still ahead of that of the United States. Both Mr. Lyttelton and Sir Andrew Duncan answered questions—prompted by events in Libya—about the suitability of the tanks and guns we were producing. The House was satisfied that the lessons of the battle-field had been fully learned. Sir Andrew Duncan said that at long last our tank production had reached a stage at which we could rely upon our production being not merely of such quality as would make us equal with the enemy but of such a quality that in future we should keep the lead. He had a satisfactory story to tell about the production of six-pounder guns and said that guns were available in greater quantities than could all be put into tanks, although this situation would rapidly improve. The Supply Ministry and the manufacturers too, he added, had their representatives in the theatres of war, and everything possible was being done to relate experience on the battle-field to the production of weapons.

On July 16 there was a secret debate in the House of Commons on the shipping situation. It had been at first proposed that this debate should be held in public, but by a special decision of the War Cabinet the Government recommended that it should be held behind closed doors

so that a frank and complete statement could be made to the House without prejudicing public safety. Members disagreeing with this course were moved solely by the conviction that it was necessary for something to be said in public about shipping losses to bring home a better appreciation of the gravity of the situation. On the day of the secret debate in the Commons the House of Lords also went into secret session to debate a motion by Lord Winster about our arrangements for merchant ship-building. There was another debate in the Commons on July 21 on Defence Regulation 18B, which permits suspected persons to be kept in preventive detention without trial. The Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Morrison, vigorously defended the Regulation as necessary to meet the emergencies of war-time, and he declined to entertain any proposals designed to limit the powers of the Executive under the Regulation. Commander Bower, who opened the debate, and some other members, expressed genuine concern about the threat to the liberty of the subject inherent in the exercise of such arbitrary powers, but the Government had the backing of the great majority of members, and a motion by the critics for the reduction of the Home Office Vote was rejected by 222 votes to 25. On August 26 Mr. Morrison lifted the ban on publication of the Communist *Daily Worker*, which he had suppressed on January 21, 1941, under Defence Regulation 2 D for "a systematic publication of matter calculated to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to a successful issue."

New legislation passed by Parliament included the United States of America (Visiting Forces) Act. This measure provides that all criminal offences committed by members of the armed forces of the United States in Great Britain shall be removed from the jurisdiction of the British courts so that they may be tried by American military courts. This surrender of jurisdiction was a constitutional innovation of great interest. There was no precedent in our history for such a step, but in the special circumstances of the war and in deference to the wish of the United States Government the Act was promptly

agreed and passed. In presenting the measure to the Commons the Home Secretary explained that the United States Government took the view, in which the British Government had concurred, that where American troops were, it was constitutionally desirable and indeed necessary that American legal jurisdiction should go with them. The United States Government, he said, had given an assurance that punishments by their own military courts would be not less severe than if the cases were dealt with in British courts. The number of American troops in this country was already large and would continue to increase, and it was in every way desirable that there should not be a duality of jurisdiction. The House added its concurrence to that of the Government—as did also the House of Lords—and after some minor points had been raised and answered, an exceptional measure was passed ungrudgingly by Parliament with expressions of goodwill towards the American troops in our midst. There was also passed the National Service (Foreign Countries) Act, to permit the calling up for service with the armed Forces of British subjects living in foreign countries. This was a general enabling measure which will be made applicable to any particular country by an Order-in-Council. Mr. Bevin explained to the House of Commons in introducing the Bill that it was to be made operative first in Egypt, where our troops were then fighting a desperate battle. The Act will not apply to the Dominions or India, or to the citizens of any Dominion or of India. Persons living abroad who are called up under the Act will have similar rights with regard to exemptions and appeals as are available under the National Service Acts in this country. On September 30 the Home Secretary moved the second reading of a Bill to prolong the life of Parliament for yet another year. This meant that the Parliament elected in 1935—which, but for the war, would have come to an end in 1940 at the latest—had its duration prolonged into the eighth year. The same Bill contained a provision for extending by one year the life of the Northern Ireland Parliament. When Northern Ireland was established by an Act of the

Imperial Parliament the statutory term of its Parliaments was fixed at five years. The Northern Ireland Parliament would have reached the end of that term early in 1943, and since no part of the United Kingdom is disposed to have a general election in time of war, it became necessary to amend the original Act by prolonging the permitted duration of the Parliament at Belfast. This was made conditional upon the passing of a resolution approving the legislation by the Commons House of the Northern Ireland Parliament.

In September two representatives of India arrived in London to represent their country in the War Cabinet. The extension of the War Cabinet—for purposes other than those which are entirely a domestic concern of the United Kingdom—into a body representing the whole Empire was found to be an indispensable aid to the co-ordination of effort required in the prosecution of the war. Prime Ministers of the Dominions, on their visits to this country since the war began, have been invited by the Prime Minister to join in the deliberations of the War Cabinet so long as they remained here. Some other visiting Ministers from the Dominions have had the same privilege. Dr. Evatt, on a visit from Australia, was, during his stay in London, the Commonwealth's accredited representative in the War Cabinet; and after he left, Mr. S. M. Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner in London, was appointed to succeed him in that office. The same rights of representation are open to Canada, South Africa and New Zealand, whenever those Dominions care to exercise them. When India received and accepted the invitation to be represented in the War Cabinet, she was to that extent given equal status with the self-governing Dominions, which was in accordance with the Government's policy.<sup>1</sup>

On August 27 Lord Moyne was appointed to be Deputy Minister of State, to assist Mr. R. G. Casey in Cairo. It was officially explained that the volume of

<sup>1</sup> The representatives of India were the Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, representing the Indian States; and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, representing British India.

work to be carried out by the Minister of State on behalf of the War Cabinet had greatly increased, and that the presence of a second Minister in Cairo would enable visits to be made, either by the Minister or his deputy, to the main centres of the Middle East outside Egypt. Lord Moyne (formerly Mr. Walter Guinness) had been Secretary of State for the Colonies and Leader of the House of Lords for about a year from February, 1941, and from 1924 to 1929 he held office in the Conservative Government as Minister of Agriculture. Another Ministerial appointment in August was that of Mr. G. M. Garro-Jones, Labour M.P. for North Aberdeen and one of the Party's front-benchers in the Commons, to the new office of Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Production. The appointment of a Parliamentary Secretary to assist Mr. Oliver Lyttelton marked a further stage in the development towards an executive Department of what had been hitherto merely the office of the Minister of Production.

In a speech at Leamington on September 26, Mr. Eden spoke of the lessons which this country had learned from the war and also of the great task of organizing relief in the occupied territories when victory has been achieved. On the first point he said that during the period between the wars our chief fault had been that we had lacked faith in ourselves and in the cause we championed. Nowhere was this more evident than in the field of foreign policy. Our will to maintain a strong and consistent foreign policy was frustrated by a desire for comfort and a quiet life, by a willingness to rest upon past glories, by a lazy aversion from new ideas, above all by our unwillingness to make sacrifices for the defence of ourselves and of what we stood for. In spite of all the evil it had brought in its train he regarded this war as having restored to us our moral purpose and our belief in ourselves. We had learned that peace was something that must be won, worked for, paid for; and that peace required endurance, sacrifice, above all vigilance, just as much as war. But if after the war we sought to drift back to the good old times, which were not really so

good for many, if we imagined that all controls could be swept aside or that we could return to the economic anarchy of the old days ; above all, if we thought that we could have peace and security on the cheap, we should bring upon ourselves discredit and disaster. In another passage, Mr. Eden said :

"The old world is dead ; it was dying even before it was broken to pieces by the hammers of Wotan and Thor. None of us can now escape from revolutionary changes even if we would. But so far as we are concerned there is only one safe way through the maze of post-war complications. That is a belief in ourselves as a nation and a belief in our duties and responsibilities as a world Power and to the world at large. If we are inspired by this sense of mission, co-operation with our Allies, great and small, will be all the easier."

Mr. Eden went on to refer to the preparations already being made by the United Nations for succouring the occupied territories after they have been freed. The object of relief would be to ensure that so soon as the territories were clear of the enemy the populations would no longer suffer privations. This task should be simplified by the existing war organizations for the distribution of supplies. The restoration of communications and essential services must be carried out at first under military supervision, but as the liberated countries began to settle down there must be a progressive transfer of responsibility to the civil administration.

There were many debates of high quality in the House of Lords, and one member of that House—the principal of the Lords Spiritual—aroused a very lively controversy in the country. Dr. William Temple, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, was well known before he became Primate for his progressive views and his interest in social reform. He had not long held the See of Canterbury before his voice on these subjects was heard again and with the added authority of his new office. On September 26 he addressed a great meeting held at the Albert Hall under the auspices of the Industrial Christian Fellowship and spoke of the part which the Church should play in furthering the solution of our more pressing social problems, particularly in the period of post-war

reconstruction.<sup>1</sup> That part of his speech which attracted most attention was the argument that it was right for the Church to lay down principles not only for the conduct of individual lives, but also for the ordering of men's corporate life ; and that the Church was well qualified to declare what kind of structure of society was wholesome for man and what was unwholesome. The habitual materialism of our society, he said, had led to that gross disparity of wealth which must at all costs be remedied. The predominant motive guiding not only the enterprise but the whole ordering of society, had been the profit motive. The profit motive, he thought, had its rightful place, but that was not the first place. The harm of the predominance of the profit motive was not merely that it was an expression of selfishness, but that to put this first might lead to an ordering of economic life which was damaging to the general interest. We had to find a way of securing that the general interest in which we were all united took precedence over every sectional interest by which we might be divided.

The Archbishop referred particularly to land and money as two special problems which should be considered with an altogether new thoroughness for the promotion of the general interest. The Christian tradition was that the right of property was a right of administration, or of stewardship, and not of exclusive use. Our present treatment of land and the buildings placed upon it struck him as peculiarly topsy-turvy, and he commended the proposals of the report of the Uthwatt Committee, which aimed at a combination of public ownership and ultimate control with private initiative. Speaking of money problems, he said that with the amalgamation of banks something that was universally needed, money or the credit which did duty for money, had become a monopoly. Where something that was universally needed was governed as a monopoly that monopoly should be taken over by the State. The banks, he declared, should be limited in lending power to the amount deposited by their clients, while the issue of new

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*. September 28, 1942.



credit should be the function of a public authority. At the same meeting the Archbishop of York also spoke. He dealt with housing and planning and said that to avoid the disastrous mistakes made after the last war there must be a central planning authority with comprehensive powers. Such an authority must plan for the whole nation, in co-operation with local authorities, and must be able to overrule private interests which attempted to obstruct schemes for the good of the country.

What lent added interest to this meeting was the fact that Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet and Leader of the House of Commons, also took part. He spoke of the growth of the social conscience of the Churches as having been one of the most significant phenomena in the development of religious feeling in our time. His view was that it was not the function of the Church as an organized body to enter the lists of the political parties. It was for the Church to provide the moral force and the driving power for social and economic development. Christian principles must be made so to permeate public opinion that no Government could act against them, and those principles must be related to the social and economic problems of the moment. This eminent layman went on to suggest that if privilege was to be ended they must be prepared to give up their privileges with the rest, not excluding the privilege of endowment and of establishment for the Church. To many ardent Churchmen this hint at disestablishment must have proved highly disturbing.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's speech, in particular, was much criticized and as stoutly defended. The correspondence columns of *The Times* bore witness to the stir which it had caused in the country. The essence of the criticism was that the Archbishop was committing the Church to an active participation in politics, whereas the concern of the Church was with the spiritual life of individual men and women. It was held that Sir Stafford Cripps had stated the duty and functions of the Church more acceptably than the Archbishop. Dr. Inge gravely frowned upon "the Court chaplains of King Demos,"

and advised them to have regard to Burke's dictum about politics and the pulpit having little in common. The Archbishop's references to the banks and the monopoly of credit were criticized as being ill-informed and inaccurate. One correspondent observed that "the essential nobility of Don Quixote was largely lost in the laughter induced by the account of the action at Los Molinos." But churchmen and many laymen rallied to the defence of the Archbishop and insisted that he was perfectly justified in upholding the Church's right and duty of pronouncing upon social problems at large. One correspondent in *The Times* summed it up neatly and ironically, quoting Lord Melbourne: "Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade the sphere of public life." The honours of the controversy seemed even.

## CHAPTER X

### MAN-POWER, LABOUR, PLANNING, FOOD

Since July, 1941, no returns had been published of the number of men registered for military and other national service, but it was known that large numbers had been called up for the Services or the factories and that future recruits for both would be drawn largely from women. Arrangements for the registration of boys and girls who had turned sixteen were announced on August 7. The next registration was on September 12. In August the Ministry of Labour began a drastic comb-out of the less essential industries to find more mobile young women for national service. On September 5 women born in 1898 who were forty-three last year registered at employment exchanges with the exception of those rendering paid whole-time service in the women's auxiliary services or the nursing or medical services attached thereto. On the previous day Mr. G. H. Ince, Director-General of man-power, Ministry of Labour, said that a further combing-out of the younger classes of women to provide recruits for the Auxiliary Services might become necessary. On September 16 *The Times* published the following information :<sup>1</sup>

"Mr. Bevin, the Minister of Labour, has instructed the department to make a thorough comb of the registers of men above military age and of all women between 18 and 45. The comb of the men of military age has been going on ever since the system of individual deferment has been introduced. It is to be carried further, for industrial use, to the age limit of the registration of men, which is 50." The Ministry had interviewed 110,000 women and placed 50,000 in the auxiliary services or industry during the fortnight ending September 5. This was the highest fortnightly figure yet reached.

Recruiting for the three Women's Auxiliary Services had been locally injured by ill-natured, ill-founded and mischievous gossip imputing widespread sexual immorality

<sup>1</sup> From its Labour Correspondent.

to service women. On September 3 the report of the Committee appointed by the Government six months previously to inquire into the amenities and welfare conditions in the three auxiliary services was published as a White Paper. The Committee, of which Miss Violet Markham was president, made short work of much unsavoury gossip.

"Vague accusations," it reported, "about drunkenness and immorality in the Services were partly responsible for the inquiry." A section of the report dealt with "service life and morals." It observed that "virtue has no gossip value" and that women in uniform became easy targets for gossip and careless talk. This had often caused distress and anxiety to relatives at home and to their menfolk fighting overseas. In fact, there had been the grossest exaggeration of a very small number of cases of illegitimate pregnancy and insobriety. The Services were on the whole well administered; conditions were highly satisfactory. The only moral failing which the Committee had to record as too prevalent was the practice of pilfering. But in general it maintained that "the nation has every reason to be proud of the women who are sharing the work of the sailors, soldiers and airmen."

The Trades Union Congress met at Blackpool on **Labour** September 7. More than 700 delegates were present and the business included a presidential address by Mr. F. Wolstencroft, who paid a warm tribute to Mr. Churchill, of whom he said :

"Well played, Churchill, well played in the greatest test of all times, well played, in spite of hard knocks and body bowling from some so-called home supporters, as well as from our opponents. . . . I thank God that in our hour of need the nation found a man with courage and faith in our people to see it through. Opposed to you in politics, I nevertheless express to you the gratitude of the working people for the magnificent example you have set. . . ."

After a tribute to the splendid resistance of the Russian armies and people, and an expression of his hope that arrangements could be made for periodical joint conferences with the Trade Unions of the United States, the Dominions and India, he turned to the German problem. There he felt bound to recognize that a vast majority

"of the German people were behind the Nazi gangsters in their policy of attempting the conquest and domination of Europe. . . . He had no time, therefore, for those who told us that even if we destroyed the war machine of Nazi Germany we could not keep a nation of 90,000,000 . . . in check. The same people said it was not the German people we fought but the Nazi gangsters in control. He did not so read the history of the last

eighty years. . . . With the lives and happiness of millions of the human race in jeopardy we could not for ever be talking sentimental nonsense about "the two Germanys." The Germans would try to enslave Europe again unless they experienced some of the treatment which they had meted out to other nations. . . . He sincerely hoped that justice, as understood by the common people who were the principal sufferers in all wars, would prevail when victory was achieved. Far better for the world that 80,000,000 or 90,000,000 should be held under bond if necessary, than that countless millions yet unborn should be called upon to undergo what millions had undergone twice in our lifetime."

The president's views were criticized by some speakers, but much more discussion was caused by a motion to remove the ban on Communist membership of trade councils. The motion was defeated, but only by a small majority (2,550,000 votes against 2,137,000), in spite of a reasoned and able attack on Communist disruptive policy and opposition to the war effort before Russia was attacked, delivered by Mr. J. Marchbank for the General Council.

During the succeeding days Sir Walter Citrine gave an account of the abortive negotiations with the American Federation of Labour for the inclusion of American Labour in the Anglo-Soviet trade union committee to which reference was made in Chapter VI, Section 1. A resolution advocating entire Government control of war industries was carried. A system of education giving every child equal opportunities was urged, but the defenders of non-provided schools made themselves heard when the dual system of control was attacked. The demand for the amendment of the Trade Disputes Act of 1927 was repeated, and Sir Walter Citrine, who read a letter from Mr. Churchill hoping that the T.U.C. would refrain from pressing the matter at the present time, complained of the "most unsatisfactory" attitude of the Conservative Party towards this issue. Some anxiety was caused by the demand of the engineering unions for increases of wages which would add £100,000,000 a year to the industry's wages bill. It was feared that this would cause another round of wage increases. The increased wages would not be available, owing to rationing, save for spending on goods in short supply. Such spending was likely to drive up all uncontrolled prices

and diminish both for the recipients of higher wages and for the general public the value, in terms of purchasing power, of their free spending money.

In spite of these difficulties and the hardships of war-time production the national output had risen to astonishing heights. Broadcasting to the United States on August 27, Mr. Oliver Lyttelton said that its people should realize that in the United Kingdom they had an ally whose population was one-third of theirs, but whose energy and work in production were still equal if not superior to the American output. In the quarter ending June 30

"we were producing about twice the weight of combat aircraft and one and a half times as much army munitions as you. . . . Out of every 100 occupied men and women in this country about 55 are working for the Government, either in the forces or in factories or in other branches of Government service. . . . To reach our present level you would need to have very nearly 40,000,000 people working for the Government."

Broadcasting on the B.B.C. Pacific service on September 23, Mr. Bevin said that out of 33,000,000 people in Great Britain between fourteen and sixty-five years of age we had mobilized over 23,500,000 men and women for service. These were doing full-time work for the nation in one capacity or another. Great numbers were doing voluntary service. Something less than 3,000,000 people were left, and these included the sick, the crippled and the aged or the children. The individual output had been admirable. Even to-day the average factory-worker was doing fifty-six hours' work a week. Such had been the contribution of the British people in terms of service. The broadcasts of the two Ministers fully justified the claim that the British output per head of munitions and supplies exceeded that of any of the belligerents, not excluding the U.S.A. and the Reich.

Planning for the future reconstruction of Britain was **Planning** actively discussed in many quarters and two important reports were published in August. The first was the Report of the Committee on Land Utilization in Rural areas over which Lord Justice Scott presided.<sup>1</sup> In the

words of a leading article in *The Times* (*loc. cit.* August 19) it showed

"the land in its true perspective as a great national asset, and recommends that the use and development of this asset must be directed by a national planning authority. But the health and balance of agriculture depend also on satisfactory living conditions for those who work in the countryside. The well-being of rural communities is a first object of any national plan for the land and the Scott Committee have construed their terms of reference in a wide and positive sense. Their detailed recommendations for reviving rural life touch on every aspect—material, economic and cultural—of satisfactory social living and trace the outlines of a new rural society in which those who prefer country life will no longer find themselves and their children at a permanent disadvantage."

The Report assumed that the great disparity between industrial and agricultural wages, which had been relieved by recent increases, would not be permitted to recur, and that the dangerous drift into the towns would be checked. It emphasized the need for better housing, more amenities, better water supplies and sanitation, and drew attention to the deficiencies of these essential services in many parishes, over 5,000 of which, for example, were entirely without sewerage systems. It sketched the outlines of the governmental structure for the execution of national planning which it suggested should be crowned by a standing committee of Ministers whose departments would be concerned therein under the chairmanship of a Minister of National Planning, who should hold Cabinet rank and be free from departmental responsibilities. The Committee also made proposals for the strengthening of social and cultural life in rural districts.

On September 10 the Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment over which Mr. Justice Uthwatt presided, published their Final Report.<sup>1</sup> It reviewed the powers and machinery "needed for the national control of the land as the indispensable basis for reconstruction policy." (*The Times*, September 10.) It rejected the nationalization of land, but it recommended that land to be developed for public or approved private purposes should be compulsorily acquired by the State; and it advocated the immediate vesting in the State of the

<sup>1</sup> Command 6,386. Stationery Office. 2s. 6d.

rights of development in all land lying outside built-up areas on payment of fair compensation. It proposed to assess compensation for the whole country

"as a single sum (that sum we call the general compensation fund) and such sum divided among claimants in accordance with the development rights attached to their lands. . . ." It insisted that if land was to be developed by or under control of the State "it is inconceivable that the two interests—the 'owner's interest' and the development rights—should continue separated." The State must acquire owner's interest if it was to control development and "marry it to the development rights." The valuation of rights for purposes of compensation should be based on the standard of values on March 31, 1939.

The Report also put forward proposals for expediting and simplifying the procedure for obtaining and exercising compulsory powers of acquisition for the purpose of post-war reconstruction. Such powers of purchase should be conferred for the urgent task of reconstructing war-damaged areas and redeveloping obsolete areas.

To this end it was essential "to invest the planning authority with the power to cut through the tangle of separate ownerships and boundary lines and make the whole of the land in the area immediately available for comprehensive replanning as a single unit." (*The Times, loc. cit.*)

Both these reports aroused much attention, but the nation looked forward with even greater interest to the publication in the winter of the results of the survey of social insurance and allied problems which Mr. Arthur Greenwood had entrusted in June, 1941, to an inter-departmental committee under the chairmanship of Sir William Beveridge.

Public health was generally good, but medical observa- **Health** tion showed a falling off in two respects. There had been some increase of venereal disease, an expected result of militarization and of the separation of families, and a heavier incidence of tuberculosis. This serious development was due, in the opinion of the majority of medical men, not to any food deficiency, but to the effects of strain (often a legacy of the period of intensive air-raiding), to the use during the "Blitz" of crowded shelters where infection was always possible, to the black-out and sometimes to overwork in the factories. Pulmonary



diseases were still far too prevalent among miners, and the committee of the Medical Research Council advocated initial and periodic medical examinations of all coal-miners in South Wales as a precaution against potential sources of infection.

**Coal** The decline in the production of coal continued to arouse anxiety and Major Lloyd George, as Fuel Minister, made many appeals to the public to economize fuel and to the miners to speed up production. To the measures already mentioned in Chapter IX may be added the publication of restrictions on supplies of coal and coke to controlled premises save hospitals and schools for three months as from August 1, the announcement that central heating would be prohibited until November 1, with some exceptions, and the issue of a variety of recommendations for the furtherance of domestic fuel economy. In spite of appeals from the miners' leaders and the pledges given by Mr. W. Lawther, president of the Mine-workers Federation, in early August—pledges which were faithfully fulfilled in his county of Durham—there were too many strikes, especially in Scotland, and too much absenteeism among the younger men employed. In mid-September the deficit seemed likely to reach a total of 13,000,000 tons for the year and there were no signs of an early improvement.

**Food** A good harvest of grain and potatoes relieved many anxieties in the hard-worked Ministry of Food, but Lord Woolton had to warn the public in a speech at Edinburgh on September 24 that "inevitable and very considerable changes in the matter of food" must be made in the next twelve months. He said in this connexion :

"We have to keep our eyes in future more on Stalingrad than on the Great Britain of 1936, 1937 and 1938. We want to get on with the job and we want to attack. But we cannot pursue a more and more vigorous war and still keep the same standards of living we had previously. . . . Whatever I do in the next 12 months will be with a view to conserving the material, physical and human forces of the country so that they may be directed to the more active prosecution of the war." When this had been done the nation would still be healthy and still sufficiently fed and could justifiably expect to emerge from the war as healthy as when it entered it. In a later

speech at Perth (September 25) he said that in 1943 we "may have to do without a little of this and a little of that, but anything we do miss will be just trimmings." Potatoes were the best reserve of food that we had and the crop had been excellent.

The problem of combining austerity in diet with the maintenance of public health was extensively discussed,<sup>1</sup> especially when it became known that tuberculosis was increasing. At the annual conference of the National Veterinary Medical Association on September 24 Dr. W. R. Wooldridge, its president, advocated a national animal health service, and Major B. de Vine made the disquieting statement that owing to the concentration of slaughtering under the Ministry of Food control, meat was now transported from one district to another, and it had come to light that much of the meat transported from rural areas to large cities where there was proper inspection should have been condemned at the place of slaughter. It must be concluded that in rural areas the public were not being protected from buying diseased meat.

To take the principal articles of diet in order, the price of *bread* was raised from September 20 by 1d. for the 4-lb. loaf. There was a glut of *potatoes* in the early autumn. Their price was reduced by 1d. per lb. From August 30 *milk* consumption was restricted to three pints per week for each person, save expectant mothers, young children and certain classes of invalids who continued to receive their pint a day. In mid-September the scheme for the more economical distribution of milk came into operation. It was announced that from October 18 national milk powder would be available, to make up for the shortage of liquid milk, in far greater quantities than in the previous winter. In mid-August it became known that the Ministry of Food had prepared a scheme for *fish* distribution by areas, which was designed to prevent such absurdities as the daily dispatch of fish from Grimsby to Bodmin (Cornwall) which could get its fish from

<sup>1</sup> An important article in *The Times* (August 28) advocating the formation of a Nutritional Council did much to arouse public interest in food values.

St. Austell, only 15 miles away, whereas the distance to Grimsby was 345 miles. The representatives of the Fish Trades General Council made alternative proposals. They were informed that the Ministry of War Transport found these insufficient and that the Ministry's scheme for distributing fish from the ports of the six zones into which the country was to be divided to the trade in each zone would come into operation in early October. It was arranged that London would still be supplied with fish from all ports.

The ration of *sweets* and *chocolates* fixed at 2 oz. per head on July 26 was doubled for eight weeks from August 23. The *egg* ration remained one per head weekly, and the retail price did not exceed 2d. each until the end of the quarter, but eggs were hard to find in many towns. Prices for the various groups or qualities of early or later *apples* were fixed in advance. Although the plum crop had been abundant the Ministry could not allow any extra *sugar* for jam-making. It suggested bottling, but the usual vacuum-top bottles were difficult to find in parts of the country. The points cost of *golden syrup* and *treacle* was raised from four to eight a pound on August 23, when all types of *biscuits*, which were price-controlled already, were rationed. The retail sale of *tinned fruit* was forbidden from September 6. *Dried fruit* became scarce from the beginning of September. As autumn approached the complaints of small gardeners that they could not dispose of their surplus *vegetables* were heard in the land. *Tomatoes*, however, were produced in great quantities in the South and over 3,000,000 lbs. were grown in the open in the Isle of Wight, a successful experiment suggested by Captain H. Beaumont, M.P. The special *cheese* ration was extended to additional categories of workers who could not take their midday meal at home or had no canteen facilities. The ordinary ration was doubled for some weeks from July 26. Against this the Ministry reduced the number of points for foods included in the points scheme from 24 to 20 per head from July 26. New three-in-one personal ration books came into use on July 26.

Dried or, as some scientists and all officials would call them, "dehydrated" foods, continued to be produced at home and imported from abroad in increasing quantities. Valuable preparatory work by the Low Temperature Research Station, Cambridge, in co-operation with other institutions in the Dominions and the United States, had made vast economies in shipping space possible by the use of powdered milk and dried eggs. Thus the 100,000 tons of dried egg which the authorities proposed to import in 1943 were equivalent to 500,000 tons of shell eggs, which would occupy more than six times the space required for the dried eggs. These, if not particularly interesting, were quite eatable and nourishing. It was found, too, that "dehydrated" vegetables preserved their essential vitamins without loss. Experiments on other foods promised further success.

The house charges which some hotels and restaurants were allowed to make were reviewed early in September, when it was decided that the maximum house charge of 7s. 6d. should be reduced from October 1 to a maximum of 3s. 6d. for luncheon and 6s. for dinner. Mr. Bevin's announcement to Parliament that he proposed to introduce a Bill to enable him to set up a sort of Board controlling the wages, hours and conditions of employment of persons engaged in the catering trade had a mixed reception. It was hard to see what on earth the proposed Bill had to do with the prosecution of the war. Nor did it appear fair to impose new burdens and controls upon an industry which had suffered so heavily in many parts of the country from commandeering of premises, closing of areas to visitors, conscription of personnel and other incidents of war, before the return of normal conditions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That regulation of certain branches of the industry was required was admitted. But the practical difficulties of legislating in war-time for the diverse conditions of the fish and chips shop, the great hotel restaurant, the tea house, the country inn and the snack bar, with many other varieties of catering were most formidable.

# CHAPTER XI

## FINANCE

The following sums were subscribed and invested during the quarter : (a) in War Bonds, 1949-51, Series "A," in Savings Bonds, 1960-70 and Loans free of interest<sup>1</sup>, and (b) in National Savings Certificates, Defence Bonds and deposits in the Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks :

<i>Week ending :</i>		(a)	(b)
July 7	....	£14,428,579	£9,423,686
„ 14	....	£21,118,444	£10,272,655
„ 21	....	£30,058,529	£10,074,201
„ 28	....	£46,154,428	£9,106,226
Aug. 4	....	£8,898,457	£8,565,733
„ 11	....	£10,337,008	£10,531,039
„ 18	....	£12,137,748	£10,133,116
„ 25	....	£12,594,324	£10,220,878
Sept. 1	....	£15,341,372	£10,378,064
„ 8	....	£25,455,200	£11,217,023
„ 15	....	£19,950,047	£11,609,966
„ 22	....	£15,834,888	£10,384,109
„ 29	....	£12,989,998	£11,541,312

The high figures under A for the week ending July 28 were caused by the decision of the directors of Courtaulds to invest the amount received by their company under a recent arbitration award in Government securities.\*

The right of the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury to the title of "Head of the Civil Service" was further discussed by several correspondents in the columns of

## CORRECTION

<sup>1</sup> In *The Tenth Quarter*, Chapter XI, p. 234, Savings Bonds were inadvertently described as Series "A."

\* Cf. *The Sixth Quarter*, p. 290.

*The Times* and a leading article in that newspaper on August 25 advocated the separation of the control of establishment matters from the financial functions of the Treasury. But this was not enough. Current criticism of the Civil Service went far beyond questions of management. It alleged that the Service lacked a sense of responsibility and that the diffusion of authority at the top "instead of making responsibility more effective, divides it so that blame is not readily assigned or inefficiency easily detected." A sub-committee of the Industrial and Social Reconstruction Committee of the Liberal Party reported in favour of the reform of the Civil Service urging, *inter alia*, the setting up of a Civil Service Staff College, new training facilities, equality of opportunity for promotion to the higher posts and the elimination of unsuitable officers. This interim report stated that nothing but harm could come of the present manifest hostility to the Civil Service on the part of the general public and "the almost contemptuous way in which Civil Servants tend to be spoken of." This was unhappily true. The public made no allowances for the great increase in the tasks and duties of the Civil Service since the outbreak of war or for the substitution of hosts of young and untrained or half-trained men and women for the professional civil servant. But public opinion criticized the system by which an incompetent or routine-minded or timid civil servant might cause grave public loss of time, of national assets, even of life in war without incurring any such penalties as such mistakes would usually entail in business or commerce. Security of tenure was a good thing, that the public recognized ; but it was not convinced that this security should prevent the demolition of semi-competents and should guarantee the future of routine-ridden and obstructive officials.

Sir Kingsley Wood's speech moving the new vote of credit for £1,000,000,000 on September 9 and the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech at the Albert Hall on September 26 have been summarized in Chapter IX of this volume.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DOMINIONS

**Eire** Little of interest, nothing of moment was reported from Eire during the quarter ending on September 30. Members of the I.R.A. shot a detective near Dublin on September 9. A week later a man was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude for having control of sixty-four Thompson guns and another to seven years on a similar charge and for being a member of an unlawful organization. The I.R.A., however, were more active in Northern Ireland than in Eire during the three months. A German bomber crashed in county Waterford on August 23 and its crew of four, one of whom was wounded, were interned. On the same evening a British machine crashed in Meath. Its pilot was mortally wounded. Local Government elections in Eire showed a large increase in support for Labour candidates and independents. The Government and the Cosgravite Opposition lost many seats. The shortage of tea, petrol and sugar continued and the sugar ration was reduced late in August from half-pound to quarter-pound. The scarcity of newsprint was illustrated on July 3 when Mr. F. Lemass, Minister for Industry, produced a provincial newspaper printed on paper manufactured from straw and of a dark brown colour.

**Northern Ireland** On July 30 six young men who had shot a policeman with five bullets on Easter Sunday were condemned to death. After their appeal had been dismissed and the Northern Irish Government had refused leave for the appeal to be taken to the House of Lords—a refusal which aroused much criticism—five were reprieved and one was executed on September 2. The usual demonstrations took place. A police raid on August 27 led to the discovery of a cache of arms near Belfast and the shooting of a man who tried to use a Thompson gun. There was

evidence that the I.R.A. proposed to attack American and British troops. On September 4 policemen engaged in rounding up suspects were fired upon in Belfast and two policemen were killed at Clady in Tyrone late on September 5. There were innocuous bomb explosions on September 25 at Belfast, the first of a series. More serious was an unsuccessful raid by armed men from across the Eire border on a police barrack in Fermanagh on September 4.

In his Budget speech in July Mr. Wild, Financial Commissioner of Newfoundland, announced a surplus of nearly \$7,250,000. Revenue had reached the record figure of nearly \$23,000,000. There would be no increase in taxation and the special war revenue tax of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent Customs duty was removed. A grant of \$1,000,000 interest free to Great Britain was announced together with a decision to raise the pay of the oversea forces and grant additional leave allowances. The Earl of Athlone, Governor-General of Canada, and Mr. Attlee, Secretary of State for the Dominions, visited Newfoundland in August and September respectively.

Thanks to Mr. Mackenzie King's statesman-like reluctance to press the conscription issue to the point of dividing British and French Canadians, this question aroused less controversy than in previous months. The Bill empowering the Government to introduce compulsory military service outside Canada when the military situation made it necessary was passed on second reading by the Canadian House of Commons. The figures were, for the Bill 158, against 54. The minority was composed of 48 French Canadians, all but one from Quebec, and six members of the Labour Party. While obtaining this enlargement of his powers, Mr. King undertook to make no use of them without giving the House an opportunity, not, indeed to open a second debate on conscription but to record their confidence—or the reverse in the policy of the Government. Parliament would be informed when the Government had decided to impose full con-



scription. The Bill was passed on the third reading by 141 votes to 45 on July 23. Mr. Cardin, leader of the French-Canadian dissidents attacked the Bill as "a breach of faith with the youth of Canada," but he added that when it became operative Quebec would obey the law. It was interesting to observe that in spite of the opposition of the Labour Members in the Federal Parliament to the Bill, the Canadian Labour Party's national convention at Toronto passed a resolution urging mobilization for total war by the unlimited conscription of man-power, wealth and natural resources. The Senate passed the Bill on the third reading by 42 votes to 9.

The report of the Canadian Royal Commissioner on the Hong Kong expedition incurred the severe criticism of Colonel Drew, leader of the Ontario Conservatives, who embodied his strictures in a letter addressed to the party leaders in Ottawa. Mr. King, after agreeing to table the letter in the House of Commons, reversed his decision on account of a legal opinion that the document violated the Commissioner's ruling about the secrecy of the inquiry. The Prime Minister's action was sharply criticized by the Opposition but a Conservative demand for the reorganization of the Department of National Defence on the ground of the inefficiency of which Colonel Drew accused it, was heavily defeated after two days' stormy debate. On September 22 Mr. Meighen, the leader of the Canadian Conservative Party, announced that arrangements were being made to hold a national convention to consider the whole question of the party's leadership and policy. He regretted the necessity of this step in the fourth year of a terrible war but he defended it on the ground that the refusal of the Government to broaden the basis of its support and its "contemptuous" refusal of offers of co-operation had impaired the national unity in this crisis of the war. Prominent Conservatives like Mr. Hanson, Colonel Drew and Mr. J. M. MacDonnell expressed their cordial approval of the proposal.

Mr. Tim Buck and other members of the Communist Party, of which he was Secretary-General, who had been

in hiding since June, 1940, when their attitude towards the war (then an unholy one since Russia was not involved) caused the Government to issue orders for their internment surrendered to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on September 25. They said that they had decided to appear voluntarily before the authorities to appeal against the orders which prevented them from devoting their energies to the strengthening of the national war effort. No one expected that they would be interned for more than a few days but many wondered why they had tarried so long.

Canadian production of war material continued to increase. On August 3 Mr. Howe, Minister of Munitions, said that early in October Canada would be producing twelve 10,000-ton steel cargo vessels a month. Canadian plants were producing 300 tanks monthly and many of these, according to approximately one-half an official estimate, had gone to Russia. On September 23 the Department of Munitions and Supply announced that Canada was now producing in a month three times as many naval and field guns and thrice as much small arms ammunition as in the whole of 1941. Heavy bombers and dive-bombers were expected to come into production later in the autumn and the Navy, which numbered about 450 vessels of all types in August, bade fair to reach a total of 540 before the New Year.

In the field of food supply Canada had sent prodigious quantities of meat to Great Britain. The wheat crop showed an all-time record of 615,243,000 bushels and the abundance of grain made it possible to devote part of the huge surplus to feeding and fattening pigs and cattle. Mr. Gardiner, Minister of Agriculture, announced on September 17 that Canada would sign an agreement committing her to supply 675,000,000 lbs. of bacon to Great Britain in 1943. Controls and rationing were extended during the quarter. Tea and coffee were rationed from August 3, individual consumption being limited to 1 oz. of tea or 4 oz. of coffee a week, but not both. The petrol allowance was further curtailed by regulations which varied locally but had the general effect of reducing

the existing allowance by one-third. Early in September newsprint came under control.

The King of the Hellenes and King Peter of Yugoslavia stayed for some time in Canada during the period, and Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, who had visited the Dominion on her way to the United States in June, spent some days there in August. Mr. Richard Law, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Attlee, Sir Walter Monckton and Sir Ian Fraser, Chairman of St. Dunstons, also visited Canada in the course of the quarter. A party of Canadian editors visited Britain in August to study the national war effort.

There were many changes in the higher command of the Canadian Services at home and abroad. Air Officer-in-Chief H. Edwards of the R.C.A.F.<sup>1</sup> was promoted to the rank of Air Marshal. Major-General G. R. Pearkes, commanding the 1st Canadian Division in this country, was appointed G.O.C.-in-C., Pacific Command. Rear-Admiral G. C. Jones, Commanding Officer on the Atlantic coast since 1940, became Vice-Chief of the Navy Staff and his former post was filled by Rear-Admiral L. Murray, Flag Officer of the Newfoundland forces. The command of the Newfoundland forces was assumed by Commodore H. E. Reid. The R.C.A.F. in Britain was expanded, the training of a Canadian parachute battalion was taken in hand in the Dominion, reinforcements of technical and other units reached England safely at the end of July and Colonel Ralston announced in August that a combined Americo-Canadian force on the British Commando model was being organized in Montana. The heavy losses, amounting roughly to 66.6 per cent of the 5,000 Canadian troops who landed at Dieppe grieved but did not dishearten the Canadian people. Indeed, when Mr. Theodore Dreiser, an American novelist of German descent and pro-Russian views, told Canadians in the course of an anti-British speech at Toronto that he hoped that if Russia were beaten the Germans would invade England and that the "lousy, horse-riding British snobs" had sent thousands of

<sup>1</sup> Royal Canadian Air Force.

Canadians to be killed at Dieppe while they kept their own troops at home, he aroused such indignation that the Federal Minister of Justice prohibited him from making any public address in the Dominion which he left hurriedly.

NOTE.—For the Alaska Road see Chapter I, Section 1.

The united War Administration, the formation of which in June was chronicled in the previous volume of this series, did not survive the quarter. In spite of the gravity of the Pacific situation and the war-time legislation of Mr. Fraser's Labour Government there was a serious coal strike in the Waikato mines in September. It threatened to paralyse railways and industrial establishments and to cause great hardship to domestic consumers. Attempts at settlement failed. The Government took proceedings against strikers, about 180 of whom were sentenced to a month's imprisonment. They likewise decided to take control of the mines for the duration of the war, while safeguarding the interests of the mining companies and the shareholders. The persons who had been sentenced did not lose their liberty for a day. In spite or because of this the miners, by a secret ballot, decided to return to work, and the mines reopened on September 28. Next day the Prime Minister announced that the Government had decided to suspend the sentences of imprisonment on strict conditions. The terms on which the strike was settled, viz. : State control of the mines for the duration of the war, unconditional resumption of work and the reference of the dispute to the Disputes Committee—had been discussed at a Cabinet meeting where only Mr. Holland of the four Opposition members of the War Cabinet dissented. A few hours after the announcement of the suspension of the sentences on the strikers, the caucus of the Parliamentary Opposition (National Party) decided to withdraw its representatives from the War Administration and Cabinet. Mr. Holland, Mr. Polson, Mr. Broadfoot and Mr. Bodkin complied, and Mr. Holland, the leader of the Party, New Zealand

said that he could not remain a member of an Administration which could not or would not enforce its own laws. The Government, on the other hand, quoted precedents set by previous Governments for the remission of sentences arising from industrial disputes if the men went back to work. Mr. Coates (Defence) and Mr. Hamilton (Associate Minister of Supply and Munitions) decided to consult together before taking action.

On July 13 the House of Representatives passed a Bill extending the life of Parliament for the duration of the war and a year afterwards, subject to its own right to review the extension annually after 1942. Mr. Fraser visited Australia and took part in a war conference on July 22 with General MacArthur, Mr. Curtin, Brigadier-General Hurley, United States Minister to New Zealand, and Vice-Admiral Leahy, commanding Allied naval forces in New Zealand waters and the adjacent seas.

**ustralia** By the end of September Mr. Curtin was completing his first year of office as Prime Minister of Australia. He had kept his head during a period of great danger. He had never been afraid to warn the electorate of the danger of its own past foibles and of any present complacency ; he had profited by experience and had shown a whole-hearted devotion to duty. He had two first-rate helpers in Dr. Evatt and Mr. Beasley ; otherwise he towered above a team of at best average ability. Many Australians looked upon him as a national rather than a Party leader. More might have done so had the Labour Party Caucus forgone its claim to select Ministers by vote and left the choice with the Prime Minister. As it was, some Ministers showed a partisanship which seemed to suggest that they were using office in war-time to further party ends, and this may have deprived Mr. Curtin of even fuller public support than he actually obtained. Still, his Government was admitted to have shown vigour and imagination in their prosecution of the war effort and to have built a solid superstructure on the foundations well and truly laid by their predecessors.

Some Australian achievements deserve particular

mention. The arrival of the American forces and the sudden need of aerodromes, camps, hospitals, military roads and depots led to the formation of the Allied Works Council, the authority in charge of all works constructed for the Allied Forces in the Commonwealth. The Council was headed by Mr. E. G. Theodore, a former Premier of Queensland. It had the power to requisition plant and equipment from private owners and to raise a body of workers known as the Civil Construction Corps by voluntary enlistment and by compulsion. It had first call on men of the 45 to 55 age group, but by July, when 52,000 men had entered the corps, only 4,000 were conscripts. The programme of the Allied Works Council was constantly extended and it was calculated that it would be employing 80,000 men by the end of the year. There was a similar expansion of munition works. In July 45,000 persons were already engaged in these, but it was hoped to more than double the number by December. Altogether over 160,000 of the 318,000 men and women whom the Government had demanded for the Services and for war work in May had been obtained by the end of September. By this time the proportion of industrial workers engaged in civil production had fallen to about two-sevenths of a total of 700,000. The Government hoped to make more use of women who were called upon to offer their services for war work when they were not already employed. One difficulty arose from an undue concentration on the supply of food to the Allied forces and a certain neglect of civilian requirements. Agriculture is the concern of member states of the Commonwealth, not of the Federal Government, and the lack of centralized control made it possible for an inordinate number of agricultural workers to migrate to war industries.

On August 5 the Australian Food Council, on which the United States Army was represented, met to lay down its policy. This was defined as : (1) To feed all the armed forces in the south-west Pacific ; (2) to feed the Australian people to the extent necessary to maintain the national health and strength in the war effort ; (3) to take a full share of responsibility for the feeding of the people of the

Allied nations subject to Australian productive capacity and the shipping available. It was admitted that Australia's new obligations had temporarily reduced the country's ability to cater for oversea requirements. The British Ministry of Food were asked to send two representatives to Australia to take part in the Food Council's discussions and to form a direct link with the British Food Council and the Allied Food Board at Washington. It was intended greatly to increase the canning of meat and vegetables and the United States were asked for equipment for this purpose. Local reserves were also to be built up.

On September 3 Mr. Curtin, in a national broadcast launched the Commonwealth's austerity campaign. After warning the public against thinking that flag-waving or the encouragement of the "insidiously comforting" thought that though they might lose battles they would always win the last one, could win them this war, he described Port Moresby and Darwin as the "Singapores of Australia." They had to be held unless Australia was to face a bloody struggle on her own soil, and to hold them "we who fight shall fight as Australians never fought before. We who work shall labour as men and women have never laboured before." His programme must have startled his audience. Already the resources of the gold-mining industry in four States had been diverted to the production of essential base metals, utility clothes in the styles already prescribed in Great Britain and the United States had been officially imposed on the buyer, and the British reader must have been surprised to learn that the manufacture of cricket balls had been forbidden in order to save rubber, cork and leather. But Mr. Curtin went much further.

"Normal living standards," he said, "must be cut by one-third. The States had been asked further to reduce the number of racing, greyhound, coursing and trotting meetings. The Press and wireless had been asked to restrict sporting news to bare essentials and not to publish social news unconnected with the war. A tax would be levied on theatres and other entertainments. Further liquor restrictions would be imposed unless consumption was drastically reduced. The Government would wipe out luxury meals and was reducing meals to three courses. Penalties for black market offences and profiteering would be drastically increased."

It might seem a bleak prospect, but most Australians were ready to bear the burden, especially when they realized that the reduction in civilian consumption had only amounted to 10 per cent at most.

Meanwhile, Mr. Chifley had introduced his Budget proposals on September 2. The total taxation this year, including new proposals, was estimated to yield £A.219,000,000. This would make the total revenue £A.249,000,000. The total expenditure would be £A.549,000,000, leaving £A.300,000,000 to be financed by loan. He estimated the war expenditure for the current year at £A.440,000,000 against £A.319,000,000 in 1941-42. He stated that Customs and Excise on beer, spirits, playing cards, tobacco and matches would be increased. On September 21 Mr. Curtin announced that an "austerity" loan of £A.100,000,000 would be opened on November 3 and on the 29th Mr. Chifley introduced the largest loan appropriation Bill in Australian financial history authorizing the appropriation of £A.200,000,000 for war expenditure during the current year.

On September 24 Dr. Evatt, as Attorney-General, introduced a Bill containing ingenious penalties for war profiteers. The Bill was retroactive to February 20. It defined nine specific offences as black marketing and contained a general clause empowering the Government to extend the definitions by regulation. Provision was made for the punishment of individual offenders by imprisonment, fine and the forfeiture of goods obtained in such transactions. Moreover, any trader convicted of black marketing must display outside his place of business a prominent notice of his conviction so that any person entering his premises could see it. If the court were not satisfied that he had displayed this notice prominently, it might require him to print particulars of his offence and conviction on his business letterheads, and might even insist on full details being published in the newspapers and over the national and commercial broadcasting stations.

During the first half of the quarter there was a marked tendency on the part of the Opposition to "snipe" the Government over their military policy, and Mr. Curtin was accused of being too sensitive to such criticism. Australian opinion, which had been profoundly disturbed by the Japanese victories, had since shown itself too pessimistic and too optimistic by turns. Hints that



Australia had been abandoned gave place to criticisms of the Government's "defensive" policy within an interval of a couple of months, and the immediate effects of the American victories in the Coral Sea and off Midway were exaggerated by the critics. On September 3 Mr. Evatt, Minister of External Affairs, in a statement to the House of Representatives at Canberra, said that three broad questions might fairly be asked:

(1) Has Australia's voice been heard in the supreme war councils? —Yes, to a greatly increased degree. (2) Has her voice been effective? It is too early to give a final reply, but the answer should be: that it has been effective to a very substantial extent, and the effect will increase as the days pass. (3) Are the Government satisfied with the position in the Pacific theatre of war? No, we dare not be satisfied till the enemy is finally overthrown. Gradually we have found the Pacific theatre assessed at a higher relative importance than many authorities were at first disposed to give it.

Dr. Evatt added that while he was in Washington the United States had accepted what was "vaguely" yet deliberately described as responsibility for Australia and New Zealand. As a result of his own mission to America there had been a very substantial flow to Australia and other Pacific areas of aircraft, tanks, and other vital supplies, far beyond the Government's wildest hopes in the black days of February.<sup>1</sup>

On July 25 it was announced that the King, on the recommendation of his Government in the Commonwealth of Australia, had approved of Lord Gowrie continuing in office as Governor-General for one year from January next. On August 27 Mr. Curtin announced that he had co-opted Sir Earle Page to the War Council, and that he would attend the meetings of the War Cabinet, so that the knowledge and experience he gained oversea while representing Australia in the United Kingdom War Cabinet and the Pacific War Council in London might be made available to the Government. It was a wise and graceful act on the Prime Minister's part.

South  
Africa

The call for recruits to make good the losses at Tobruk met with an encouraging response, and on September 14 General Smuts, in a speech at Pretoria, said that the losses had been made good. The new second division

<sup>1</sup> From a summary published by *The Times* of September 4 and cabled by its Canberra correspondent.

was to be armoured, and it may be noted here that the production of artillery, armoured cars and other arms and munitions of war more than maintained its high level during the quarter. In his speeches General Smuts drew public attention to the need for full and combined consideration of the problems of peace by the United Nations and for the expulsion of the Axis forces from North Africa. On July 1, in a message to the South African Science Congress, he said :

"The new world has to be built on the ruins of the old, and foresight, forethought, wise and prudent planning, may prove to be very helpful. In that planning science should play an important part. It is not so much a question of laying down definite programmes and policies. Indeed, it would be presumptuous on our part to do so. We are only one in a grand company of 27 United Nations . . . and united action by all of us will be wanted so much for the peace as for the war. It could only be foolish and harmful for one or another of us to launch forth on declarations of policy which may disturb our united action in the future and prove as much of a snare to us and an illusion to our enemies as did the resounding Fourteen Points of President Wilson in the last war. Our general peace objectives have been already declared in the Atlantic Charter, to which all the United Nations subscribed, and more specific declarations should be enunciated in the same united manner. This, however, does not prevent a careful consideration and discussion of special problems which might arise without definitely pronouncing on them. . . ."

In August General Smuts met Mr. Churchill in Egypt. Commenting on his talks with the British Prime Minister, which had lasted more than a day, he said that the war situation in all its aspects had been fully reviewed and there had been an important exchange of views on all major issues. At Pretoria on September 8 he said that the war could not be won until the "most vital theatre," the Mediterranean, had been cleared. He added :

"I felt this and said so three years ago. My view was not shared by others, and it was thought I was paying too much attention to . . . a mere sideshow. Events have shown, however, that unless North Africa is cleared up with the greatest decision the resources of the Powers' whole war effort will be in jeopardy." Referring to his talks with Mr. Churchill he said that they had found the situation in the Middle East "uncomfortable and disturbing." Plans were made, decisions taken which involved big changes. The immediate danger was lessening. "In all the vacillation and chopping and changing one thing stands out clearly in South Africa : our people took a sound and proper line from the start. One might wonder what would have happened in this country if we had not determined to clear East Africa and Abyssinia. . . . The effort of our army is one of the most vital contributions to that victory which is coming. Whoever vacillated we did

not. We drove the enemy thousands of miles towards our own victory and we shall continue to endeavour to clear the shores of the Mediterranean. When this is done the end will not be far off." Since then other developments had taken them to Madagascar. No place was more vital to South Africa. "We shall be in every place where the security of South Africa is menaced, and will not call on others to fight for us."

A number of persons suspected of sabotage were arrested at Durban in July. Large quantities of explosive were found in their possession. Two South Africans were sentenced to death for blowing up a post office in May when a passer-by was fatally injured, but they were reprieved. Mr. F. C. Sturrock, Minister of Railways and Harbours, visited London in August to consult the Government on matters affecting South Africa's war effort, with a view to ensuring the most complete co-ordination in matters of supply and shipping. On September 22 the Prime Ministers of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia announced the establishment of a new South African Command embracing Southern Rhodesia. The Eastern African Command would remain in control of the Madagascar operations.

## CHAPTER XIII

### INDIAN DILEMMA

On July 2 the India Office made the following announcement :

"His Majesty's Government have invited the Government of India, if they so desire, to arrange for the representation of India at the War Cabinet and on the Pacific War Council in London. This invitation has been accepted and the Governor-General in Council has accordingly nominated Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar for this purpose and has suggested to the Crown representative that he should invite a member of the Order of Princes to join Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar in representing India at the War Cabinet and on the Pacific War Council. His Excellency, in consultation with the Governor-General in Council, has invited the Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar to serve for the present in this capacity, and his Highness has accepted the invitation."

"The King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Sir E. C. Benthall, Sir Jogendra Singh, Sir J. P. Srivastava and Sir Muhammed Usman to the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India."

"The following appointments to portfolios have been made by the Governor-General: Mr. N. R. Sarkar, Commerce; Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Defence; Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport; Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Information; Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour; Sir Jogendra Singh, Education, Health and Lands; Sir Jwala P. Srivastava, Civil Defence; Sir Muhammed Usman, Posts and Air."

"The portfolio of the Commander-in-Chief (Sir Archibald Wavell) will in future be designated the War Portfolio. The new Defence Member will be responsible for work at present discharged by the Defence Co-ordination Department, together with such other matters relating to the defence of India as are not included in the portfolios of War and Civil Defence. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, the new representative of India in the War Cabinet, remains a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council without portfolio."

The purpose of the expansion of the Executive Council was to associate representative Indian opinion more closely with the war and to provide for the increasing burden of war work thrown on the Central Government. The membership of the expanded Council represented more provinces and more communities than on any previous occasion. The Sikhs and the Depressed classes had representatives for the first time in the persons of

Sir Jogendra Singh and Dr. Ambedkar, and six provinces—Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the Punjab, the United Provinces and Bihar—were represented. The political outlook of the Council could fairly be described as moderately Nationalist, differing from that of the Congress Party and the Moslem League on matters of method and timing. But if the Government intended to impress the Congress Party they failed entirely.

On July 9 it was known that Mr. Rajagopalachari, who had already left the Working Committee of the Congress Party, had resigned his membership of the party. He said plainly enough that Mr. Gandhi's negations and the unrealistic attitude of the party to the war would do it great harm. Next day came the news that Mr. Gandhi had presented a draft resolution to the Working Committee which demanded the withdrawal of the British from India and affirmed that the Congress Party no longer felt obliged to observe a policy of non-embarrassment of the war effort in India. Most of his colleagues gave obvious signs of embarrassment, and when the resolution was released in summary form to the Press it had clearly been watered down. The correspondent of *The Times* at Bombay gave the following summary of the resolution :

"The resolution urges the withdrawal of British power from India, pointing out that the Congress Party wishes to take no hasty step and would like to avoid, as far as possible, any . . . action that might embarrass the United Nations. If the appeal fails the Congress Party will be reluctantly compelled to make use of all its non-violent strength for the vindication of political rights and the liberty of India under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi.

"On the withdrawal of British rule responsible men and women in the country will come together to form a provisional Government representative of the important sections of the people of India. This gathering will later evolve a scheme whereby a constituent assembly can be convened to prepare a constitution acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives from India and Great Britain would later confer for the adjustment

of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as allies in the common cause of meeting aggression.

"In making its proposal . . . the Congress Party insists that it does not desire to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in the prosecution of the war or to encourage aggression against India or China. The proposal . . . was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all British persons from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home. . . . As the issues contained in the resolution are far-reaching, the Working Committee will refer them to the All-India Congress Committee which will meet in Bombay on August 7."

The resolution came in for much criticism from the non-Congress Press, but Congress newspapers supported it although without enthusiasm. They preferred to accept milder interpretations of it such as were given by the President of the Congress Party, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who said that it was only "a reiteration of the national demand," and no ultimatum. Mr. Gandhi, however, said flatly on July 14: "There is no room left for negotiation, either they recognize Indian independence or they don't." The proposal was intended to help China and to make common cause with the Allies, but, he added:

"There is no question of one more chance. After all this is open rebellion. I conceive of a mass movement on the widest possible scale, though of a purely non-violent character."

Such was Mr. Gandhi's "offer" which, *pace* the Maulana, was an ultimatum. The British must hand over or face mass civil disobedience. In return they would receive the co-operation of "free India" which, as the correspondent of *The Times* at Delhi drily remarked: "might be expected to appeal to the United Nations, provided that they were prepared to take the risk of gaining an ally at the expense of losing an army."

It was also clear that a withdrawal on Mr. Gandhi's terms would hand India over to the Congress Party which, as Mr. Jinnah observed, was exactly what Mr.

Gandhi had been manœuvring for and the Moslems would never accept. Again the Working Committee had taken good care to make no promise that India would make a full military effort on the side of the United Nations. It was likewise pointed out that by Mr. Gandhi's time-table there would be a long period of negotiation between Indian parties and between the provisional Indian Government and Great Britain, during which the Japanese could hardly be expected to sit still ! Foreign critics, whether in the United States, Turkey or China, marvelled at the illogicality of the proposal. Many prominent Indians found it grossly ill-timed. Even Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in a statement to the representative of the official Chinese news agency, in which he suggested a joint American, Chinese and Russian guarantee of Indian independence, admitted that the majority of Congress leaders did not approve of the policy of non-violence as a defence against aggression.

While the Government waited for the next move from Congress and the extremer Congressmen prepared sedition in eastern India, the political deadlock produced no diminution in Indian recruiting which had increased steadily since the spring and gave the Duke of Gloucester one of the texts for a stirring appeal to the peoples of India to lay their differences aside and fight beside their friends and allies "for your homes, your posterity and your culture." But the appeal had no effect on the Congress.

On July 21 the India Office announced that the ban on the Indian Communist Party and its newspapers had been lifted in consequence of its change of front. On July 27 Sir Stafford Cripps broadcast to America on the Indian situation. After recapitulating the terms of Mr. Gandhi's demand and describing the attitude of the Moslems and the depressed classes towards it, he said that to have agreed to the Congress Party's or to Mr. Gandhi's demands would have meant inevitable chaos and disorder.

"This . . . was stated by Mr. Gandhi himself. Quite recently he had said 'Anarchy is the only way. Someone asked me if there would be anarchy after British rule, Yes, it will be there, but I tell the British to give us

chaos.' The action which he was threatening was calculated to endanger both the American war effort and our own, and to bring the greatest aid and comfort to our common enemies. Mr. Gandhi was not prepared to wait; he would rather jeopardize freedom and the whole cause of the United Nations. He threatened the extremes of pressure in this most difficult hour to win political power for his own party. The Indian people as a whole did not support this attitude. Gandhi might gain a measure of support for mass disobedience but for the sake of India as well as for the cause of the United Nations it would be our duty to insist upon keeping India as a safe orderly base for our joint operations against the Japanese. . . . Once victory was gained, India had been offered complete freedom to provide in whatever way she chose for her own self-government. But victory must first be gained. Nor could we allow the actions of a visionary, however distinguished in his fight for freedom in the past, to thwart the United Nations' drive for victory in the East."

The broadcast produced much wrathful language from various leaders of the Congress Party, as did Mr. Amery's statement in Parliament on July 30 that the Government, while they stood firmly by the "broad intention" of the offer made on their behalf by Sir Stafford Cripps would not permit the Congress policy to bear fruit. The Congress Party, in their present demand, entirely ignored this offer and were that demand conceded its concession would bring about a complete and abrupt dislocation of the machinery of government in India than which no greater disservice to the cause for which the United Nations were fighting could be imagined. He continued :

"His Majesty's Government, while reiterating their resolve to give the fullest opportunity for the attainment by India of full self-government, cannot but solemnly warn all those who stand behind the policy adumbrated by the Working Committee of Congress that the Government of India will not flinch from their duty to take every possible step to meet this situation."

The warning was ineffective. The Congress Party worked itself into a rage. "My only reply to Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Amery is that we shall fight the British Government to the last," said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at a mass meeting at Allahabad on August 1, and he went on to say that he repented of seeking a compromise with Sir Stafford Cripps, and added, that he hated Dominion Status and did not want India to occupy the same status as "Costa Rica, Rumania, Bulgaria,<sup>1</sup> Australia, or

<sup>1</sup> How the first three countries could be classed as Dominions passes the writer's comprehension.



Canada." India's status must be far higher. Comments from America and England had removed his mental worries and he was about to plunge into "the stormy sea that lies ahead."

So the situation deteriorated. The Bishop of Calcutta urged arbitration. At Poona the Mahasabha condemned the "fifth column activities" of the Congress Party. The Government banned the formation of private armies which was beginning in some provinces. Unsuccessful attempts were made to bring Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi together. Mr. Vallabhai Patel, one of Mr. Gandhi's chief lieutenants, told a meeting that if the British would only go India would be safe from invasion. Other orators were openly seditious. Mr. Gandhi "hinted fairly clearly that although the movement of civil disobedience will be based upon the principles of non-violence, it is not his intention to stop it simply because violence arises."<sup>1</sup> It was unhappily clear that while a strong body of Indian opinion condemned the decision of the Congress leaders, no Indian party was likely to oppose it. That task would be left to the authorities.

On August 4 the Government of India published the text of a draft resolution submitted to the Congress Working Committee on April 27 at Wardha, with a summary of notes of the discussion of that draft. These documents were seized in a raid on Congress offices at Allahabad. They showed that Mr. Gandhi's draft differed in important particulars from the Allahabad resolution of May 1 and from that of July 14. Mr. Gandhi expressed the opinion in the draft that Britain was incapable of defending India; that the Indian Army was a segregated body which the Indian people could not regard as their own.

"Japan's quarrel," Mr. Gandhi continued, "is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. India's participation in the war has not been with the consent of the representatives of the Indian people. . . . If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of the Japanese or any

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*. Delhi message, August 3.

aggressor attacking India." The defence, he was careful to explain, would be effected by means of non-violent non-co-operation. Should the Japanese invade India the Congress Party must put no obstacle in the way of the British forces, but must not assist them "in any active manner."

It was not surprising that Mr. Gandhi's resolution should have encountered much criticism in the Working Committee and Pandit Nehru urged that its tenour would make the world believe that the Congress Party were "passively lining up with the Axis Powers." In the end an alternative draft prepared by Pandit Nehru was passed in response to an appeal from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. But by August, Pandit Nehru would seem to have lost all power to criticize Mr. Gandhi which he may have possessed and the ensuing developments of the Congress Party's policy appear to have secured his full approval.

On August 5 the Working Committee passed a lengthy resolution restating its demand for the withdrawal of British Power so as to enable India "effectively to become an ally of the United Nations and fight the aggressor." After an address by Mr. Gandhi and some further discussion, the resolution which combined an appeal with threats was passed. The following were its principal passages<sup>1</sup> :

"A free India will assure the success of freedom and democracy by throwing all her great resources into the struggle for freedom against the resources of Nazidom, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subjected and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations. . . .

"On the declaration of India's independence a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them their trials and tribulations in the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command together with the Allied Powers.

"The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the United Nations.

"The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response. Criticism made in many foreign quarters has shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom which is significant of the mentality of domination. . . . The All-India Congress Committee

<sup>1</sup> From Reuter's summary telegraphed from Bombay, August 5.

would yet again, at the last moment, renew this appeal to Great Britain and the United Nations.

"The Committee resolves to sanction for the vindication of its inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines and on the widest possible scale. Such struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhi, and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken."

It was a preposterous resolution. The notion that the Dutch, the Greeks or the Norwegians would be encouraged by a British surrender to the Congress Party in India, that an Indian Government led by Mr. Gandhi, whose ideal was the establishment of the pacifist Tolstoyan anarchy throughout India, could be trusted to resist aggression by violent as well as non-violent means was absurd. It was equally ridiculous to expect the British to repudiate their pledges to the Moslems, the scheduled castes and the other minorities of India and hand over power unconditionally to the Congress. But it was passed, and on August 7 the All-India Congress Committee met at Bombay to ratify it. Mr. Gandhi addressed the gathering for 45 minutes. He disclaimed all hostility for the British. He averred that he was a greater friend of theirs now than he had ever been, but that his friendship demanded that he must make them aware of their mistakes. He did not wish to see the Japanese in India, for that would mean the end of China, perhaps of Russia.

Next day Pandit Nehru proposed and the Congress Committee passed a resolution requesting Mr. Gandhi to constitute himself the leader of "a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale." *The Times* summed up the meaning of the resolution as follows :

"By contrasting this action with 'the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle,' the drafters of the resolution made clear its character as a declaration of war, and revealed the hollowness of the pretensions of amity and support for the United Nations put forward in some of the speeches. Its purpose, as the precedent of 1920 shows, is to paralyse the forces of law and order and to bring all the processes of government to a standstill. To do this against a Government already engaged in waging war is a direct means of bringing help and comfort to the enemies of that Government. The fact that the resolution called for a struggle conducted by what are called 'non-violent' methods did not make it any the less a declaration of war."

The Government of India did not shirk their duty.

After the passing of the resolution which was only opposed by a handful of Communists and other dissentients, and after Mr. Gandhi had accepted the leadership of the Party in the campaign in obedience to "an inner voice" which had told him that he would have "to fight against the whole world alone," the Viceroy's Executive Council met and issued orders restricting the publication of factual news relating to the mass movement undertaken by Congress or to the Government's measures against that movement and also empowering Provincial Governors to supersede such local authorities as might act directly or through agents in a manner prejudicial to the defence of British India, to the maintenance of law and order and of public communications and to the efficient prosecution of the war. The Government also issued a long statement of policy in which they reiterated the undertakings already made by the Imperial Government regarding the future freedom of India. Of the Congress resolution they said :

"Acceptance of the resolution must mean the exposure of India to an Axis attack from without. Internally the withdrawal of British rule invites civil war, the collapse of law and order, the outbreak of communal feuds, the dislocation of economic life with its accompanying hardships. . . . In the view of the Government of India it is not too much to say that the acceptance of the demand now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the betrayal of the Allies, whether in or outside India, the betrayal in particular of Russia and China . . . betrayal of all those loyal and co-operating elements in India which do not support the Congress Party, but which have played so active and so valuable a part in the prosecution of the war."

On the morning of August 9 the authorities arrested Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and all the members of the Working Committee of the Congress Party who took part in the Bombay meeting. Mr. Gandhi was interned at Poona in the Aga Khan's residence. Provincial Governors took similar precautionary measures in the case of provincial leaders who publicly advocated the organization of strikes and other anti-Governmental activities or acts of sabotage. Mr. Jinnah appealed to Indian Moslems to keep aloof from the Congress movement pending decisions by the Working Committee of the All-India Moslem League and warned the Congressites against molesting Moslems. Abroad the arrests were defended, if their

necessity was deplored, in Great Britain. The Turks, while favourably disposed towards Indian aspirations to independence, entertained doubts as to the good sense or the good faith of Mr. Gandhi and his lieutenants. Some Turkish newspapers, indeed, roundly accused the Congress leaders of a deliberate betrayal of the democratic ideals of which they professed to be the champions. Official America did not comment on the arrests in spite or because of the attempts made by the Congress leaders to invoke the intervention of President Roosevelt—not to mention General Chiang Kai-shek and the Soviet Ambassador in London. Unofficial American comment was divided. "At a time when the United Nations are fighting for their existence," wrote the *Washington Post*, "no tears will be wasted on Gandhi and those other leaders who like him would in the name of freedom destroy it." But there were dissenting voices, in the American Socialist Party, for instance; and talk of an American guarantee of the British promise of post-war independence for India found its way into the Press.

More immediately important was the result of the arrests in India. Within a few hours of the arrests rioting had broken out in Bombay and outbreaks in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Madras, Poona, and many other cities followed. They were marked by incendiarism and pillage. The police had to use firearms freely, especially in large towns, where the *badmash* (criminal) classes took advantage of the disorder. But the riots in most of the cities of Bombay, Madras, the United and Central Provinces—the Punjab, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province remained at peace—paled before the violence of their outbreak in Bihar. Here "non-violence" took atrocious forms. Mobs headed by Congressmen attacked police stations, burned police officers and men alive, murdered the crew of an aeroplane which had made a forced landing, dragged two young Canadian officers of the R.A.F. from a passenger train in which they were travelling, without any connexion with the disturbances or their suppression, hacked them to pieces and, after parading their dismembered bodies through Marhowra town, flung them into

the river. At the same place a British officer and four soldiers were ambushed, captured and beaten to death. Such were a few of the misdeeds of the apostles of non-violence. They were accompanied by concerted attacks on the railways in Bihar and the adjoining provinces which might have had disastrous consequences had the Japanese opened an invasion from Burma at the same time. Indeed, the concentration of attack on the strategic railways in the eastern provinces by which Bengal was almost completely cut off for some days from the rest of India, and also in parts of Madras might have been arranged by the Japanese so seriously did it threaten the communications of the armies.

These disturbances were soon suppressed. When the All-India Assembly opened on September 14 statements made by members of the Executive Council on that day and subsequently showed that damage assessed at £750,000 had been done to the railways, over 500 post offices had been attacked and over 50 burned down. Much municipal and private property had been wrecked. On September 16 Sir Reginald Maxwell, the Home Member, told the House that 31 policemen had been killed and a great number injured; seven officials had been killed and eleven soldiers and airmen. Police firing on rioters had caused 340 deaths and 318 more had been killed by the troops. The R.A.F. had had to use machine-guns on railway-wrecking crowds on five occasions. The debates in the Central Assembly were marked by the usual division. Nationalists, while disapproving the Congress policy, sought to lay the blame on the Government, and in some cases accused police and troops of "atrocities," which they failed to substantiate. Some blamed the imposition of collective fines, largely because they were not levied on Moslems unless these had joined the rioters, which few had done. In the Council of State the Government came in for further criticism, but on the whole they held their own—in the absence of the Congress-members—in both houses, and the Moslem League's representatives generally supported their action against the Congress Party.

The situation, nevertheless, at the end of the quarter was unsatisfactory enough. The Congress Party and its supporters were furious at the failure of their attempt to blackmail the Government into surrender and the suppression of the revolt, for such it was in Bihar. Mr. Churchill's statement on India which is summarized in Chapter IX of this volume irritated many non-Congress Nationalists who held that he had underrated the strength of the Congress Party and had failed to recognize the widespread character of the national demand for a transfer of power. The Mahasabha, now that the Congress Party had put itself out of action, took up the Congress cry for immediate concessions, but the conversations between its leader, Dr. Mookerjee, and Mr. Jinnah came to nothing. Mr. Jinnah told the Press on September 13 that

"the Moslem League refused to be stampeded under the stress of emergency into participation in a composite provisional government unless all parties in that government recognized and guaranteed the Moslem right to secession. British policy, he said, seemed only to take account of the 'implacable' Congress Party which, to his mind, was 'a counsel of despair.'"

So on September 30 the deadlock continued and the prospects of agreement between the parties were as distant as they had been when the Cripps mission failed. The dilemma was patent, although many Americans and Indians and some British critics did not see it. It was impossible to form a representative Indian Government, including the Congress Party, unless its leaders were to be released and given fresh scope for political sabotage, a risk that no sane government would take in this crisis of the war. A more Indian or all-Indian Government without the Congress Party would have been far from representative—for that party was the strongest numerically in India—and it could only be formed if the other Indian parties could agree to co-operate, which they seemed quite unable to do. The demand for an immediate transfer of power had not abated; in large parts of the country the British were regarded with hatred, and sedition, though temporarily scotched, was far from slain. And by a strange paradox, more volunteers, both from

the military castes and the Moslems and from the new elements, notably the "untouchables," entering the Army, had joined the colours during the quarter than during any equivalent period since the war began.

Among other events of interest during the quarter was the suppression of the Hur brigands in Sind and the destruction of the temple-stronghold of their chief, Pir Pagaro, by order of the Government in September. In the province of Assam, where the Government had fallen in the previous December and the administration had been conducted by Sir Andrew Clow, the Governor, Sir Muhammad Sadullah was able to form a Ministry acceptable to the Legislature. On August 21 Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Information Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, resigned in order to have his hands free to deal with any Congress agitation against the Indian States. He had been Diwan (First Minister) of Travancore State and now resumed this office. More American troops and many British were understood to have reached India during the quarter. On September 14 Mr. Rajagopalachari, in a statement of some retrospective interest, denied Sir Stafford Cripps's assertion in Parliament that Mr. Gandhi's intervention caused the Congress Working Committee to reject the British Government's proposals. He claimed to have been present throughout the discussions and said that Mr. Gandhi, after expressing his adverse opinion at the outset, had not interfered any more.



## EPILOGUE

*The Twelfth Quarter*, a period of great stress on the Russian, and of successful defence on the Egyptian and of equally successful offensive defence on the Pacific front, marked a military turning-point in the war. Before it was over, Allied production for war had surpassed that of the Axis; the Germans, although their offensive in Russia was still most dangerous and was pressed with ruthless vigour, courage and skill, were behind their timetable; the Russian armies had learnt much from their reverses of the previous year and had shown all their old ability to take heavy punishment without losing their morale. Throughout Eastern Europe the clients of the Axis displayed a growing reluctance to face the drain on their resources of man-power and material production that the German Moloch demanded; its victims continued to defy their tyrants and to detest the New Order imposed on them by military force. In Norway, Holland and Belgium, and to an increasing extent in France, popular resistance to the conqueror took an ever more active form in the shape of sabotage, under-production, and a general hostility to the collaborationist policy of which Quisling in Norway and Laval in France were the principal advocates. In Asia, although the Indian situation remained far from satisfactory, the Japanese were still unable to master the political and geographical problem presented by the resistance of the Chinese Government and people; and in the Pacific theatre of war the Americans had seized Guadalcanal, an island of great strategic importance, and had held it against a series of heavy counter-attacks, while the Australian Army had opened a successful attack upon the Japanese invaders of New Guinea. These were good omens for the offensive which was being prepared. Sections of the British, and still more of the American, people showed a restive impatience when it tarried, but as a whole the English-speaking world, and not least the Anglo-Celts of the proud island of Britain, waited with increasing confidence for that change in the fortunes of the war which their instinct assured them was close at hand.

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